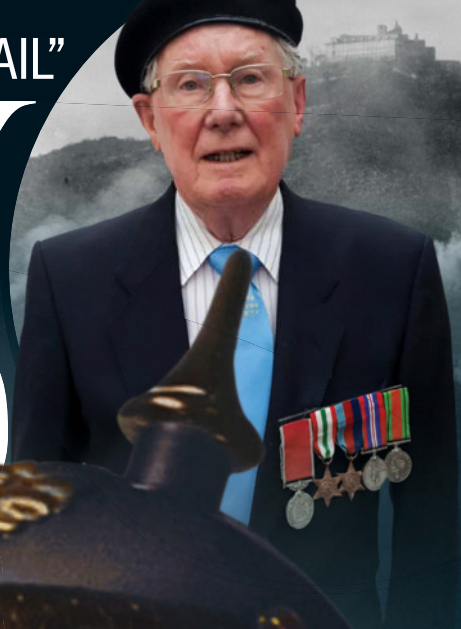





MONTE CASSINO "WE FOUGHT THEM TOOTH AND NAIL"

HISTORY of WAR

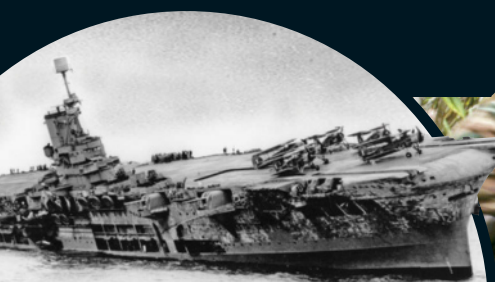


RISE of the REICH

The bloody battles and superior strategies that transformed Germany into a military superpower




**RICHARD I
vs
SALADIN**
CONQUERING TACTICS OF
THE CRUSADES




**SINKING THE
ARK ROYAL**
INSIDE THE DISASTER THAT
ROCKED THE ROYAL NAVY



**COLOMBIA'S
GUERRILLA WAR**
UNCOVER THE ROOTS OF THE
50-YEAR JUNGLE INSURGENCY



**COMMANDERS
IN CHIEF**
THE US PRESIDENTS WHO
SERVED ON THE FRONT LINE

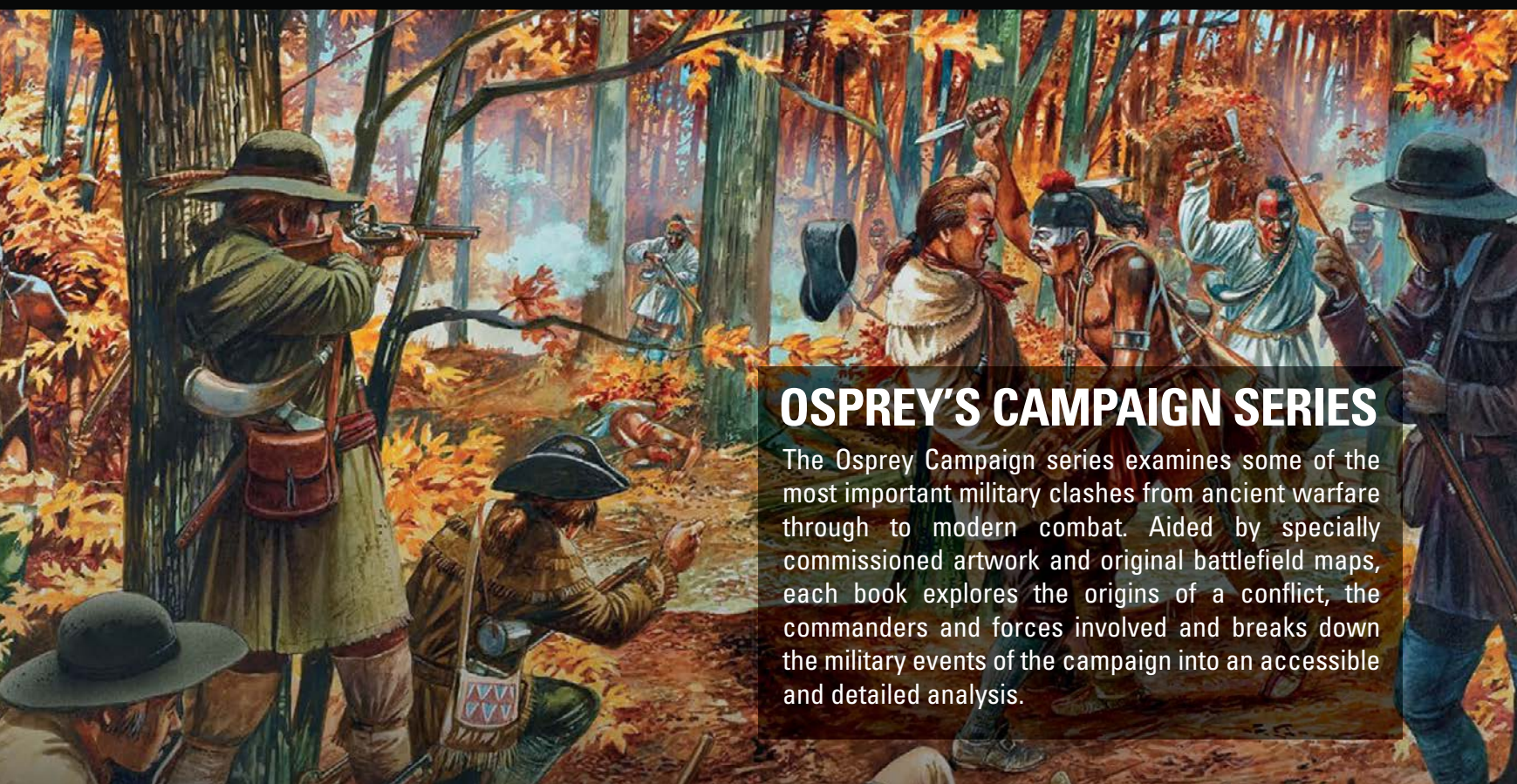


**BATTLE OF
VALMY**
DISCOVER FRANCE'S
AGAINST-THE-ODDS TRIUMPH

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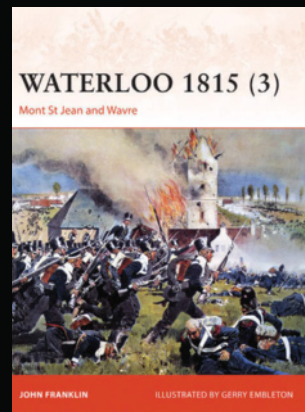
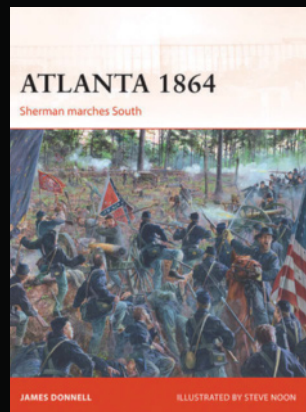
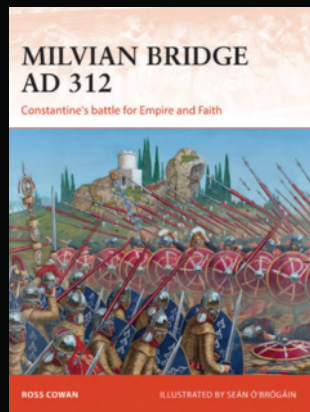
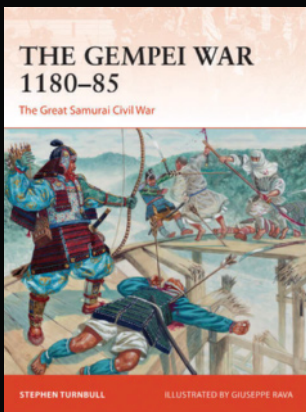
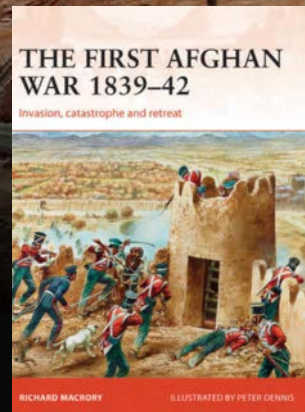
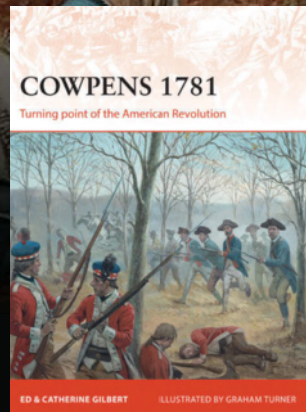
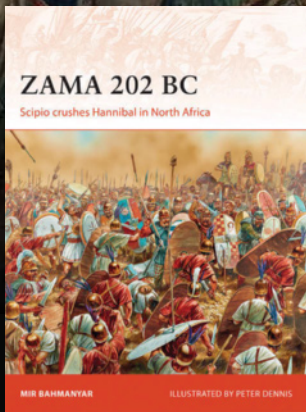


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Welcome

“It is not by speeches and majority resolutions that the great questions of the time are decided... but by iron and blood”

– Otto von Bismarck

A triumphant German invasion, Paris occupied and France forced into a humiliating surrender – however this isn't 1940, but 1871.

The Franco-Prussian War sealed the fate of the Second French Empire and saw the birth of the Second German Reich. Prussia, and its president minister the peerless Otto von Bismarck, had utilised aggressive politics, unrivalled strategy, along with unstoppable battlefield tactics to consolidate its formidable power in Europe.

Not only did this relatively short war see the likes of Helmuth von Moltke confirmed

as the world's finest military leaders, it also set the scene for the coming global conflict that would alter warfare forever.



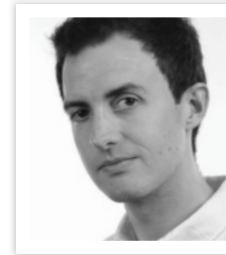
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Tim Williamson
Editor



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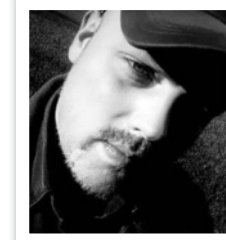
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TOM GARNER

Engrossed in the presidential debates still raging at time of writing, this month Tom took a look at some of the USA's most famous soldier presidents (p.46). He also spoke with a Monte Cassino veteran (p.36) and historian of the Crusades (p.20).



ROB SCHÄFER

To complement his Heroes of the Reich series (p.88), this issue Rob looks further back to the origins of the German Empire during the Franco-Prussian War. Starting on page 28 he explores the technology and tactics behind the Prussian victory.



TOM FARRELL

Columbia's turbulent 50-year guerilla war appeared finally to be coming to an end in 2016, but at time of writing is still just short of a lasting peace deal. Over on page 82, Tom takes a look at the FARC and the roots of its decades-long jungle war.

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Anton von Werner's 1894 painting "Im Etappenquartier vor Paris" (A Billet outside Paris). It depicts German troops occupying a building just outside Paris during the Franco-Prussian War



RISE OF THE REICH

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Explore the campaigns that led Europe's armies to the walls of Jerusalem and heretics closer to home

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Several separate campaigns, spanning centuries, were launched to spread the power of Christendom

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The fight for the road to Jerusalem was a saga of starvation, treachery, violence and even miracles

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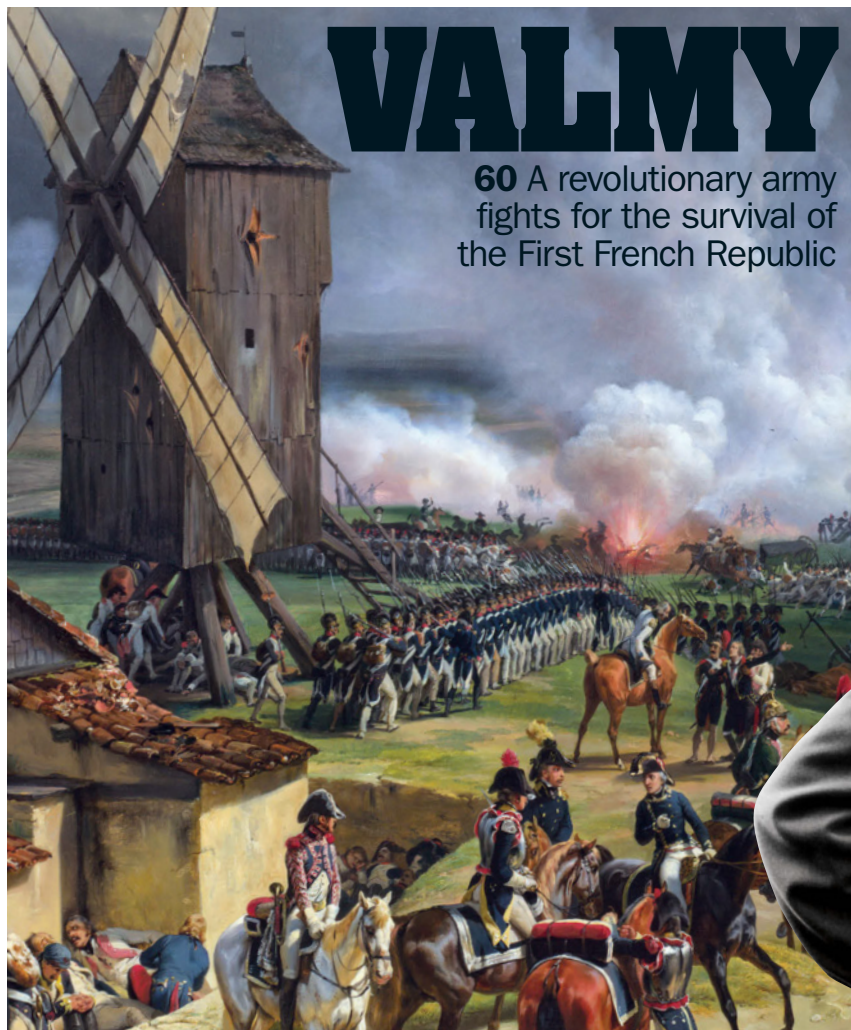
The holy warriors protecting the pilgrim road

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Meet the leaders and heroes on both sides of the battle line, who fought for god and glory

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This piece of armour saved its owner from certain steely death – twice



COLUMBIA'S GUERRILLA WAR

82 Discover the roots of this 50-year rebellion

WAR_{in} **FOCUS** **DESERT KICKS**

Taken: 1 October 2011

US Marines open fire with an M777 Howitzer during operations in Afghanistan. Weighing less than 4535 kilograms and with a range of up to 40 kilometres, the M777 is the latest 155mm artillery gun of its kind. It is currently the primary choice of the US Marine Corps, which has deployed it in Afghanistan since 2006.



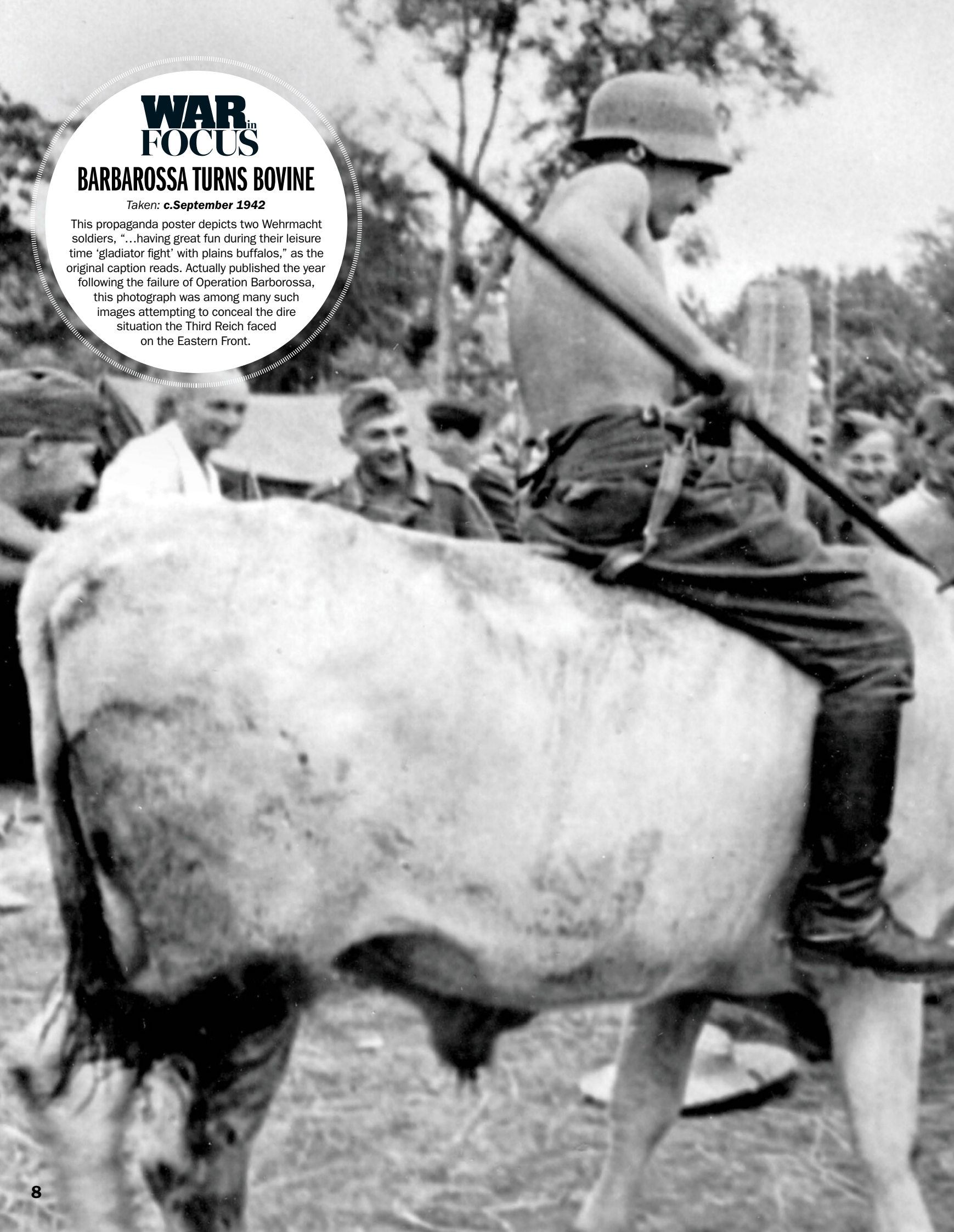


WARⁱⁿ FOCUS

BARBAROSSA TURNS BOVINE

Taken: c. September 1942

This propaganda poster depicts two Wehrmacht soldiers, "...having great fun during their leisure time 'gladiator fight' with plains buffalos," as the original caption reads. Actually published the year following the failure of Operation Barbarossa, this photograph was among many such images attempting to conceal the dire situation the Third Reich faced on the Eastern Front.







A black and white photograph showing a soldier's knapsack and a rifle leaning against a wooden door. The knapsack is in the foreground, and the rifle is leaning against the door behind it. The door has a panel design. The scene is set outdoors, likely in a trench or a similar military environment.

WARⁱⁿ FOCUS

CHILDHOOD ON THE WESTERN FRONT

Taken: c.1917

A little girl plays with her dolls next to soldiers' guns and a knapsack in Reims. Beginning in April 1917, the disastrous Second Battle of the Aisne was a major French offensive, stretching from Rheims in the south east to Roye in the north west.

During the battle, the city and its famous cathedral were relentlessly shelled by German artillery.





WARⁱⁿ FOCUS

OVER THE TOP AT INCHON

Taken: 15 September 1950

Lt Baldormero Lopez leads his Marines over a sea wall on Red Beach during the UN invasion of Inchon, South Korea. This successful amphibious landing was a turning point in the Korean War and saw UN forces quickly recapture Seoul from the North Koreans. Lt Lopez was killed just minutes after this photograph was taken, shielding a live grenade with his body.

TIMELINE OF THE...

CRUSADES

Despite repeatedly marching into disaster, European kingdoms launched multiple crusades to recapture Jerusalem, as well as to rid Christendom of so-called heretics

The 1099 Siege of Jerusalem saw vengeful crusaders indiscriminately massacring Muslims and Jews in the city

FIRST CRUSADE

The first attempt to recapture Jerusalem involved vast numbers of knights and peasants from Western Europe. Thousands died marching via Constantinople and Anatolia. Jerusalem was captured in a bloodthirsty siege and Crusader states were established.

1095-99

1147-49

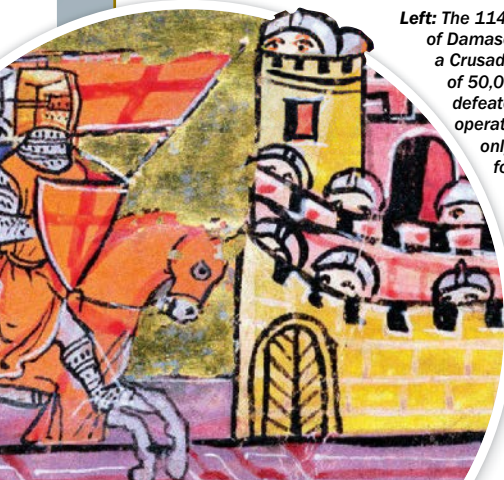
1187

1189-92

SECOND CRUSADE

In an attempt to reclaim the Crusader county of Edessa, Louis VII of France and Conrad III of Germany led a failed expedition against the Seljuks. Conrad was defeated at Dorylaeum and Louis conducted a failed siege of Damascus.

Left: The 1148 Siege of Damascus saw a Crusader army of 50,000 men defeated in an operation that only lasted four days



HATTIN AND JERUSALEM

In 1187, the invading force of Salah ad-Din destroyed the army of the Kingdom of Jerusalem at Hattin and captured its king, Guy de Lusignan. The Holy City then fell after a 12-day siege and Jerusalem would remain in Muslim hands until 1917.

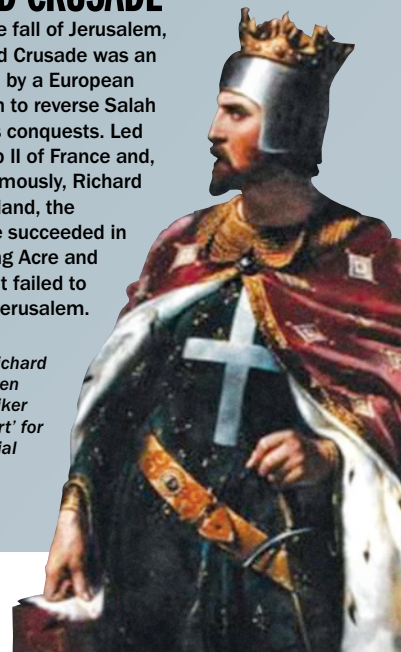


The defeat of the Christian army at Hattin left the road to Jerusalem open for Salah ad-Din

THIRD CRUSADE

After the fall of Jerusalem, the Third Crusade was an attempt by a European coalition to reverse Salah ad-Din's conquests. Led by Philip II of France and, most famously, Richard I of England, the Crusade succeeded in capturing Acre and Jaffa but failed to retake Jerusalem.

Right: Richard I was given the moniker 'Lionheart' for his martial prowess





ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE

In 1209, Pope Innocent III declared a Crusade against fellow Christians for the first time. Over 20 years, the Cathars in southern France were subjected to brutal sieges and massacres.

The expulsion of Occitan Cathars from Carcassonne. It has been argued that the Albigensian Crusade could have been a religious genocide



EIGHTH-NINTH CRUSADES

Generally agreed to be the last 'official' Crusade, Louis IX of France attacked Tunis but died there of dysentery. The future Edward I of England subsequently defended Acre against the Mamluks, but this last Crusader city would finally fall in 1291.

Above: Prince Edward leaves for the Ninth Crusade in 1270. He would take a leading role in the fight against the Mamluks

1202-04

1209-29

1270-72

1396

FOURTH CRUSADE

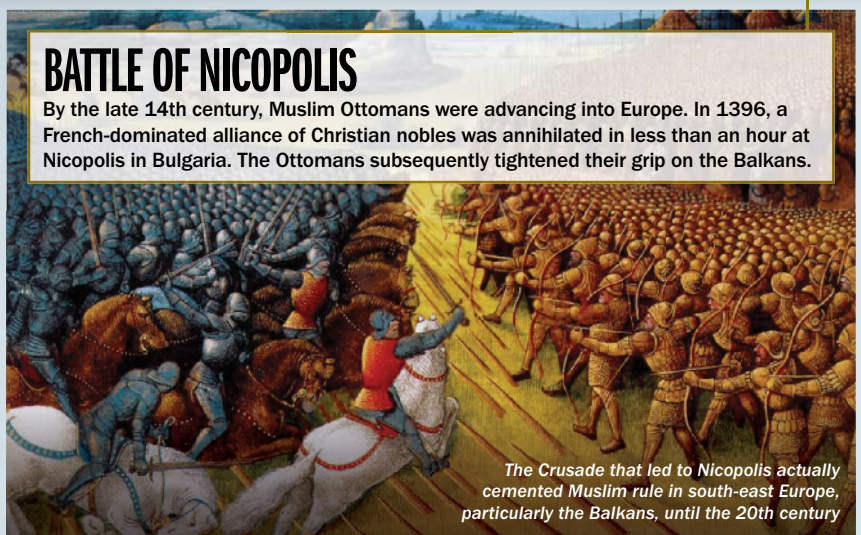
Originally designed to capture Jerusalem, the Crusade became embroiled in Byzantine politics en route and the Christian city of Constantinople was eventually brutally sacked. Only one-tenth of the Crusading force arrived in the Holy Land.



Above: The 1204 Siege of Constantinople sealed the Great Schism between the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox churches

BATTLE OF NICOPOLIS

By the late 14th century, Muslim Ottomans were advancing into Europe. In 1396, a French-dominated alliance of Christian nobles was annihilated in less than an hour at Nicopolis in Bulgaria. The Ottomans subsequently tightened their grip on the Balkans.



The Crusade that led to Nicopolis actually cemented Muslim rule in south-east Europe, particularly the Balkans, until the 20th century

Images: Alamy

ON THE HOLY ROAD

Crusaders travelled long distances to reach the Holy Land, but campaigns were also launched into Europe and North Africa

1 THE FIRST CRUSADE 1095-99

Launched in France, the First Crusade gathers followers, both noble and poor, from all over Europe and marches east. Thousands die, but Jerusalem is taken against the odds.

2 SIEGE OF ANTIOCH 1097-98

Antioch has to be taken to gain access to the Holy Land. Although its Byzantine walls are formidable and the besieging First Crusaders lose many of casualties, the city is eventually taken.

3 SECOND CRUSADE 1147-49

Launched in France and Germany, the Crusade is led by European kings for the first time. Although the expeditions to the east fail at Damascus and Dorylaeum, a western expedition expels the Moors from Lisbon.

Below: The Christians of Jerusalem before Salah ad-Din. The Sultan of Egypt and Syria spared the population who were ransomed or sold into slavery



**'PEASANTS CRUSADE' MASSACRES
JEWS IN CENTRAL EUROPE**
1096 RHINELAND: GERMANY, FRANCE

**THE VENETIAN CRUSADE
IS LAUNCHED**
1122-24 REPUBLIC OF VENICE

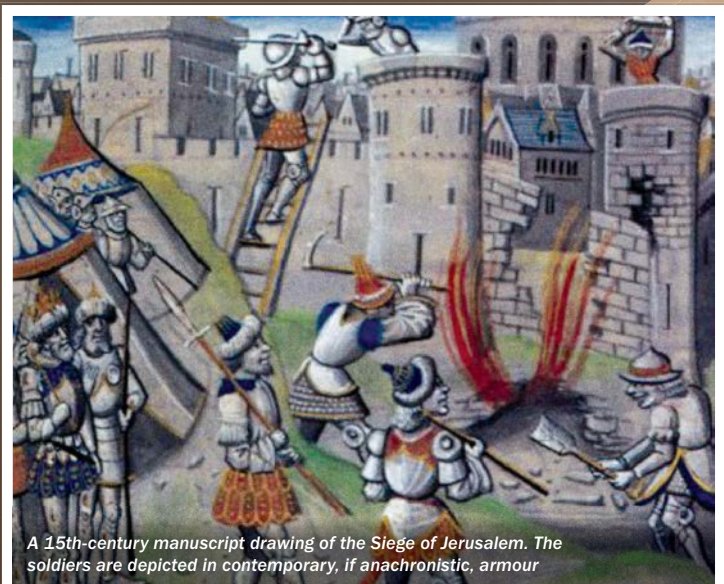
**POPE URBAN II DECLARES
THE FIRST CRUSADE**
1095 CLERMONT, FRANCE

**THE CHILDREN'S
CRUSADE HALTS**
1212 MARSEILLE, FRANCE

**LOUIS IX OF FRANCE
DIES AT TUNIS**
1270 TUNIS, HAFSID KINGDOM

4 SIEGE OF JERUSALEM 1187

After the crushing Muslim victory at Hattin, Jerusalem is highly exposed. After a 12-day siege, Balian of Ibelin surrenders the city to Salah ad-Din. Unlike the Christian conquest of 1099, the Muslims do not massacre the garrison or inhabitants.



A 15th-century manuscript drawing of the Siege of Jerusalem. The soldiers are depicted in contemporary, if anachronistic, armour

5 THIRD CRUSADE 1189-92

The re-conquest of Jerusalem shocks Christendom. A massive coalition, including the Holy Roman Empire, France and England, captures Acre and Jaffa but Jerusalem remains in Muslim hands.

6 FOURTH CRUSADE 1202-04

The Crusade is ambitiously designed to retake Jerusalem with a coalition of European nobles and imperial Byzantine military and financial assistance. However, the Crusaders turn on the Byzantines and Constantinople is notoriously sacked.

7 ALBIGENSIAN CRUSADE 1209-29

Pope Innocent III's Crusade against 'heretical' Cathar Christians in southern France consists of massacres and sieges on a scale that is later likened to genocide.

8 SIEGE OF ACRE 1291

By the late-13th century, the last major Crusader stronghold of Acre becomes besieged by Mameluke Muslims. The fortress collapses and the city is taken. The crusades to reclaim Jerusalem are over.



Hospitallers defend Acre against the Mamelukes. Acre was the symbolic end to crusading in the Holy Land

THE LIVONIAN CRUSADE
1198-1209 ESTONIA, LATVIA

BATTLE OF NICOPOLIS
1396 NICOPOLIS, BULGARIA

RICHARD THE LIONHEART CONQUERS CYPRUS
1191 CYPRUS

SIEGE OF ANTIOCH
1097-98 ANTIOCH, LEVANT

SIEGE OF TRIPOLI
1102-09 TRIPOLI, LEVANT

KRAK DES CHEVALIERS CONSTRUCTED
1142-70 COUNTY OF TRIPOLI, LEVANT







TEUTONIC ORDER FOUNDED
1190 ACRE, KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM

KNIGHTS HOSPITALER FOUNDED
1113 HOSPITAL OF SAINT JOHN, JERUSALEM

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR FOUNDED
1119 TEMPLE MOUNT, JERUSALEM

JERUSALEM CONQUERED BY CRUSADERS AND SUBSEQUENTLY RECAPTURED BY MUSLIMS
1099, 1187 JERUSALEM, PALESTINE

RAYNALD DE CHÂTILLON CONDUCTS PIRATE RAIDS AGAINST MUSLIM PORTS
1182 RED SEA

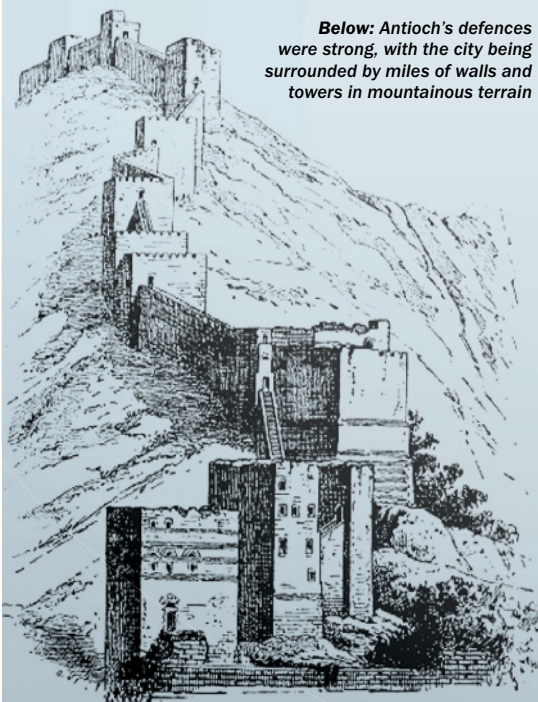
-  **FIRST CRUSADE**
1096-99
-  **SECOND CRUSADE**
1147-49
-  **THIRD CRUSADE**
1189-91
-  **FOURTH CRUSADE**
1202-04

“A MASSIVE COALITION, INCLUDING THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, FRANCE AND ENGLAND, CAPTURES ACRE AND JAFFA”

SIEGE OF ANTIOCH

1097-98

The fight for the road to Jerusalem during the First Crusade was an epic saga of starvation, treachery, violence and even miracles



Below: Antioch's defences were strong, with the city being surrounded by miles of walls and towers in mountainous terrain

Starting in 1096, the armies of the First Crusade marched thousands of kilometres in an attempt to retake Jerusalem from Fatimid Muslims. By 1097 many had already died, particularly in Anatolia (modern-day Turkey), but soon the path to Palestine was in sight. In order to reach Jerusalem, the Crusaders had to get past Antioch – strategically located near the border of Anatolia and what is now Syria.

Antioch had once been one of the great cities of the Roman and Christian worlds – its huge walls built by the great Byzantine emperor, Justinian I. Despite its long history though, Seljuk Muslims had only captured the city in 1085.

Located in mountainous territory, the city was built on the floor of the Orontes Valley but its citadel was placed high on a mountain that was nonetheless, contained within the city's walls. The walls themselves were formidable, and ran in long arcs with many towers that included portions along the River Orontes and snaked up a mountain ridge. The resulting siege would test the Christian warriors to the limit of their endurance.

On 27 October 1097, Crusading armies arrived at the city led by Godfrey of Bouillon,

Bohemund of Taranto and Raymond IV of Toulouse. They disagreed on how to proceed, with Raymond advocating an immediate frontal assault, while Godfrey and Bohemund preferring to lay siege. The latter prevailed and the city was tenuously invested.

The Crusaders did not have enough troops to completely surround Antioch and the governor of the city, Yaghi-Siyan, was able to have food brought inside through the southern and eastern gates. This meant that the besieged lived in better conditions than the besiegers.

In November, an army led by Bohemund's nephew, Tancred, reinforced the Crusaders, but these new arrivals further drained supplies and the besiegers faced starvation. By the end of December, the situation was becoming serious and Bohemund set out with a large force to gather supplies, giving the Muslims two chances to attack, both by Yaghi-Siyan and an army from Damascus that was marching to relieve Antioch. The attacks were repelled but the supply situation remained severe.

Throughout January 1098, starvation plagued the besiegers, and Crusaders began to desert. In February, another Muslim army under Ridwan of Aleppo attempted to relieve the city, but he was also defeated. In March, conditions improved with fresh supplies and reinforcements, enabling the complete encirclement of Antioch. However, in the spring it was discovered that a large relief army under Emir Kerbogha of Mosul, some 75,000 strong, was on the march.

Bohemund bribed an Armenian captain in the city called Firouz to betray the garrison and let the Crusaders in and on 2 June, Firouz led 60 knights up a ladder into an unguarded tower. Once the Gate of Saint George was opened, the Crusaders streamed in and massacred the Muslim population. Nonetheless, the citadel remained in Seljuk hands, and two days later, Kerbogha arrived and besieged the victorious but heavily beleaguered Christians.

The situation was now dire for the Crusaders, who had virtually no supplies left. Despite this, morale was boosted by the 'discovery' of the Holy Lance in the city's cathedral, and it was decided to ride out and meet Kerbogha's army head-on. On 28 June, the Crusaders carried the lance out of the city in good formation and the disunited Muslim army began to collapse. When the emir of Damascus left, the Muslim force fell apart and the Crusaders killed many of the fleeing soldiers. The citadel immediately surrendered and the siege, which had lasted for eight months and cost thousands of lives, was finally over. The march to Jerusalem could belatedly resume.

THE 'DISCOVERY' OF THE HOLY LANCE

THE FINDING OF A CHRISTIAN RELIC IN ANTIOCH WAS REGARDED AS EITHER A MIRACLE OR A FORGERY, BUT IT UNDOUBTEDLY INSPIRED THE DESPERATE CRUSADERS

By June 1098, the Crusaders inside Antioch were at their lowest ebb and were on the brink of being overwhelmed by a fresh Muslim army. However, on 10 June, a lowly priest with a dubious reputation called Peter Bartholomew came before Raymond of Toulouse and Bishop Adhemar with an outlandish claim. He spoke of visions where Saint Andrew had informed him that the Holy Lance – the spear that pierced Christ's side during the

Crucifixion – was buried in Saint Peter's Cathedral in Antioch. Despite Adhemar's scepticism, the rumour spread and soon a more reputable priest claimed he received similar visions. Adhemar believed this other priest and on 15 June, a group that included Raymond and Bartholomew entered the cathedral and dug for hours. After Raymond had given up and left, Bartholomew jumped into a hole and cried out that he had found the lance.

The news of the 'discovery' spread quickly and while Adhemar still thought Bartholomew was a fraud, he kept his opinion quiet. The appearance of the lance had significantly raised morale among the Crusaders. Now spiritually revived, they rode out on 28 June carrying the lance aloft and crushed the numerically superior Muslim force under Emir Kerbogha against the odds. The Holy Lance seems to have induced more visions among the Crusaders, as many claimed that during the battle, Saints George, Demetrius and Maurice led them. Whatever the truth of the Holy Lance, the 'Miracle of Antioch' helped to inspire the Crusader victory.



The Holy Lance was 'found' beneath Saint Peter's Cathedral

**"ONCE THE GATE OF SAINT GEORGE WAS OPENED,
THE CRUSADERS STREAMED IN AND MASSACRED
THE MUSLIM POPULATION"**

*Duke Robert of Normandy at the
Siege of Antioch. Robert was the
eldest son of William the Conqueror*



Richard bids farewell to the Holy Land after the Third Crusade. Although his crusading exploits became legendary, the king failed to capture Jerusalem



RICHARD THE LIONHEART & THE THIRD CRUSADE

Professor John France of Swansea University discusses the truth behind England's legendary Crusader king, and the men who fought for him



WHAT WERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE THIRD CRUSADE AND HOW WAS IT ORGANISED?

In 1187, the Kingdom of Jerusalem's army, which had held the city for the Latin West, was destroyed at the Battle of Hattin. It was a great shock and there was a call for another Crusade, but it took a long time to organise. The kings of England and France were bitter rivals so Richard had to settle things with his French rival before they could depart. In a sense, it's the last of the 'classic Crusades'. The First Crusade was a dash to Jerusalem and that's the template for what followed in the 12th century.

WHAT QUALITIES DO YOU THINK STOOD RICHARD APART AS A SOLDIER AND GENERAL COMPARED WITH HIS CONTEMPORARIES?

Contemporaries were impressed because he led from the front. Richard personally fought, and in an age where personal relationships among the elite were important, here was a man who was prepared to risk his life for the causes he espoused, and this won respect. Also, he was a very shrewd soldier who always won. He was additionally skilled at logistics and thought carefully about how his armies were fed and moved. This meant his armies had good morale and strength. He was an exceptional soldier.

WAS RICHARD'S ARMY EXCLUSIVELY ENGLISH OR DID IT INCLUDE SOLDIERS FROM HIS FRENCH DOMAINS AND ELSEWHERE?

It was not exclusively English. The Crusade was never preached in England, but it may have been preached in his French possessions. Most of his army seems to have been mercenaries. We hear a good deal during the Siege of Acre about 'paying' men. Richard seemingly preferred to use professional mercenaries rather than rely on enthusiasts. This meant that his comparatively small army was very efficient. The strike force was the cavalry, with the infantry defending them. The biggest source of mercenaries then was from the Low Countries, but Richard undoubtedly had troops from northern Spain, plus France and England. It would have been a multi-national army.

HOW IMPORTANT WAS RICHARD'S CONQUEST OF CYPRUS TO THE CRUSADE AND WHAT METHODS DID HE USE TO DEFEAT THE ISLAND'S RULER?

Richard's fleet was scattered as it approached the eastern Mediterranean. Cyprus had been seized by its despotic Byzantine governor. When Richard landed, he was, at first, reasonable in his dealings with the governor, but then turned on him, defeated him in battle near Nicosia and captured him. Richard's army was very professional, while the Greek army was quite small. It's said that while he was surrendering, the governor asked Richard not be bound by chains of iron. Richard agreed and bound him with chains of silver instead. The reality is that Richard was a very shrewd person and the suspicion is that he always had Cyprus in his sights, though that can't be proved.

WHAT WAS RICHARD'S ROLE DURING THE SIEGE OF ACRE?

His role was equal with Philip II of France. Phillip was very able as an attacker but Richard eclipsed him. At one stage after the city's fall, the question of paying knights arose and Richard offered to pay twice as much for every man. There was a great deal of personal friction between the two men.

During the siege, there are two big contingents, the English and the French, as well as dozens of other contingents, including Italians and Germans who gravitate towards the person who is the most successful general. Philip finds himself eclipsed because Richard is the military leader and at the end of the siege, he returns home.

This leaves Richard as a single commander with no other rivals. Many of the French and German troops resent Richard, but who else is going to lead them? He was the one undisputed king and a very good soldier.

EVEN IN THE BRUTAL CONTEXT OF THE TIMES, TO WHAT EXTEND COULD RICHARD'S MASSACRE OF MUSLIM PRISONERS AFTER ACRE BE SEEN AS A WAR CRIME?

Acre had surrendered on terms, which Saladin had agreed to, that a ransom would be paid for the garrison of roughly 4,000 including women and children. They had surrendered on the basis that Saladin would keep his promise. Saladin knew that Richard would soon march into Palestine. He also knew that time was on his side – the departure of Philip was a big signal. Saladin used the hostages as a means of delaying Richard's army, keeping it at Acre and causing discontent and even desertion.

Richard discerned this and issued an ultimatum, which Saladin paid no attention to. Richard marched the garrison out and slaughtered them in the sight of Saladin and his army. They are both equally complicit, admittedly, but Saladin knew he was playing with the lives of his people.

WHAT WERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE BATTLE OF ARSUF AND HOW IMPORTANT WAS IT?

After Acre, Richard marched in a column with three blocks of cavalry surrounded by infantry – a fighting march. However, he also had a fleet, so as they marched south, the infantry were rotated. They could rest because they were close to the sea where the ships supplied water. Richard moved down the coast like a battering ram.

Saladin's strategy was to harass the Crusaders' rear, in an attempt to break up the tight formation. At Arsuf he had to engage because Richard was getting uncomfortably close to Jerusalem and the coastal plain was narrowing. Arsuf was the last big area where Saladin's army could manoeuvre and fight in its accustomed style.

The battle was the moment of truth for the two men. If Richard had been vanquished, the Crusade would have ended immediately. If Saladin had been defeated, then the Crusade would have had a clear run to Jerusalem. As it was, Richard was the victor but Saladin managed to withdraw. However, Saladin never openly challenged Richard again.

WHAT WERE CONDITIONS LIKE FOR THE COMMON SOLDIER IN RICHARD'S ARMY?

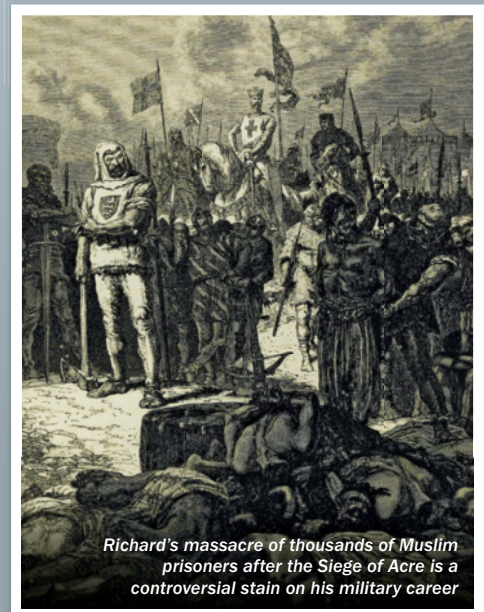
Awful – the siege of Acre had been going on since 1189 and they were ensconced in a fortified camp around the city, suffering from disease, hot conditions and not knowing where their next meal was coming from. The troops were dependent on Western shipping remaining near the coast. Once they moved, Saladin's army continually harassed them. One of Saladin's secretaries says he saw crossbowmen and infantry in Richard's army marching south with 10-12 arrows stuck in them. The losses were probably very high, but we don't have figures.

WHAT PREVENTED RICHARD FROM CAPTURING JERUSALEM?

He was not keen to do it, because he knew that even if he captured Jerusalem, who would garrison it? The Hospitallers and Templars who counselled him had no solution. So Richard was somewhat half-hearted and undoubtedly sceptical. Eventually there were big arguments and Richard suggested a committee to decide – a committee with all his placemen on it. Unsurprisingly, they decided marching on Jerusalem was risky – the city is well inland so to attack in the presence of Saladin was very dangerous. Richard wanted to force Saladin into a political settlement. The problem was that the only thing holding the army together was Jerusalem and his reluctance caused friction.

IF THE CRUSADE'S LEADERSHIP HAD BEEN MORE UNITED, COULD THEY HAVE TAKEN JERUSALEM?

Yes, if there were more unity there's a good chance that they could have prevailed. However, that would have involved Richard not being himself. People tend to speak about the Crusade as though it was doomed, but it wasn't. All conquests required a political base at this time and the political base of the Kingdom of Jerusalem was settlers and a large Christian population. People forget that the Middle East was still a heavily Christian area and therefore what you really see are two elites, Turkish Muslim and Latin Christian, fighting over Palestine. There lies the collision.



Richard's massacre of thousands of Muslim prisoners after the Siege of Acre is a controversial stain on his military career

Images: Alamy

HEAD TO HEAD

Military technology did not develop much over 200 years of crusading and traditional medieval weapons such as swords, shields and bows defined warfare



TEMPLAR KNIGHT

YEARS IN OPERATION: 1118-1291

WEAPON

Crusader swords were single-handed, medium-length longswords with a straight, double-edged blade. Owning a sword confirmed nobility on the bearer and the pommel often bore cross-shaped motifs.

SHIELD

Most Crusader shields were long and very expensive. They would be decorated with symbols to aid recognition. As well as defence, shields could also be used as a bludgeoning weapon.

TOTAL



ARMOUR

Hauberks were chainmail shirts that covered the whole body to the knees. They were very protective but extremely heavy, causing restricted movement and discomfort in hot conditions. Wealthy knights also wore 'great helm' helmets with eye slits and breathing holes.

DISCIPLINE

Military orders, like the Templars, were individually and tightly disciplined, and could influence victories such as Montgisard. However, their success was often dependent on their military leaders in broader, disunited coalitions that could lead to disaster such as at Hattin.



THE HEAVY CAVALRY CHARGE

The Crusaders' most famous, and offensive, battlefield tactic was the heavy cavalry charge. Fully armoured, mounted knights were a serious threat in any confrontation, as the shock of a mass cavalry charge at full speed could inflict serious damage. However, charges required great discipline that was not always possible in the heat of battle and under the threat of mounted archer counterattacks. Crusader armies also overly relied on this tactic leaving few alternative options if battles went wrong. Consequently, Crusader battles were usually either stunning successes or catastrophic defeats.

Above: Richard I charges at the Battle of Arsuf. When deployed effectively, heavy cavalry could be terrifyingly effective

Salah ad-Din's cavalry at the Battle of Hattin. Although the cavalry depicted are not armed with bows, most Islamic horse contingents consisted of mounted archers



“THESE TROOPS WERE HIGHLY MOBILE, WHICH ALLOWED ISLAMIC ARMIES TO MAINTAIN A DISTANCE FROM THE ENEMY”

Illustrations: Jean-Michel Girard / The Art Agency

THE HORSE ARCHER

Muslim tactics during the Crusades were heavily dependent on mounted archers. As light cavalry these troops were highly mobile, which allowed Islamic armies to maintain a distance from the enemy and then choose the best time to close in to attack. Horse archers loosed arrows from the saddle

without dismounting or halting and could even shoot backwards when retreating. However, the arrows from the composite bows often failed to penetrate the heavy armour of the Crusaders. Nonetheless, they were effective at disabling horses and thereby limiting heavy cavalry charges.

MUSLIM ARCHER

YEARS IN OPERATION: 1095-1291

WEAPON

The composite bow was a formidable weapon. It had a bone core and a re-curve, which gave it extra power and a longer draw length in a short amount of space. It was best used on horseback.

ARMOUR

Although hauberks were used as the primary defence in hand-to-hand combat, most Muslim soldiers wore a padded overcoat with a scale cuirass. Conical helmets could also deflect sword blows.

SHIELD

Compared to Crusader equivalents, Islamic shields were usually round in shape with a boss in the middle. Their small size and light weight indicated a preference for speed over protection.

DISCIPLINE

When they were led well (by Salah ad-Din or Zengi for example) Islamic armies were formidably disciplined, which contributed to their ultimate success in the Holy Land. Nonetheless, they were often as divided as the Crusaders and as a result suffered serious defeats such as Antioch in 1098.

TOTAL



KNIGHTLY ORDERS

A Templar Knight on horseback. Of all the Christian orders of the Crusades, the Templars were the most zealous and powerful

For 200 years, warriors from across Europe fought to defend the power of Christianity in the Holy Land, in dedicated military organisations

Although the First Crusade had been successful, the European presence in the Levant was precarious and the burgeoning Crusader states were vulnerable to attack from neighbouring Muslim powers. There was also a swathe of Christian pilgrims, now travelling east through dangerous territory, who needed protection. It was in this context that military orders of pious knights sprang up to protect their hard-fought gains in and around the new Kingdom of Jerusalem.

KNIGHTS TEMPLAR



OFFICIALLY KNOWN AS THE 'POOR FELLOW-SOLDIERS OF CHRIST', THESE ZEALOUS WARRIORS WERE A MAINSTAY IN DEFENDING CRUSADER LANDS

Founded in 1119 at Temple Mount in Jerusalem, the Templars are the best known of the monastic orders and vigorously fought in the Holy Land for decades. Templars were characterised by their religious zeal and led a pious lifestyle of chastity, clean living and prayer. While their primary task was defending the Kingdom of Jerusalem and pilgrims, they grew wealthy and their influence was widespread. One estimate states that, at their peak in the 1170-80s, there were 2,600 Templars in the Levant and 7,000 more spread throughout Christendom.

Used as shock cavalry troops, their greatest victory arguably came at the Battle of Montgisard in 1177. Led by Baldwin IV of Jerusalem, 80 Templars helped the king's small force by contributing to a cavalry charge that routed Salah ad-Din's (better known as Saladin) army, which numbered perhaps 26,000 men. Bernard of Clairvaux described how an ideal Templar should act: "He is a truly fearless knight... for his soul is protected by the armour of his faith, just as his body is protected by armour of steel. He need fear neither demons nor men. Not that he fears death, no, he desires it."

"TEMPLARS WERE CHARACTERISED BY THEIR RELIGIOUS ZEAL AND LED A PIOUS LIFESTYLE OF CHASTITY, CLEAN LIVING AND PRAYER"

© Jose Cabrera

KNIGHTS OF SAINT LAZARUS



THIS SHADY BUT UNIQUE ORDER COMPRISED ILL WARRIORS WITH A STIGMATISING DISEASE: LEPROSY

First mentioned in 1142, this order was born out of a leper hospital in Jerusalem that existed before the First Crusade. In the west, leprosy was seen as a sin, but it was a more common disease in the east and Byzantine clergy saw lepers as marked by God's favour. Templars and Hospitallers who contracted leprosy could join the order and continue their duties. Like the Hospitallers, the order concentrated on medical duties but they were involved in many battles, including the Fall of Acre in 1291, where every member who fought there was killed.

TEUTONIC KNIGHTS



THOUGH PRIMARILY KNOWN FOR THEIR CAMPAIGNS IN THE BALTIC, THIS GERMANIC ORDER WAS INITIALLY FORMED IN THE HOLY LAND

The 'Order of Brothers of the German House of Saint Mary in Jerusalem' was founded as a military order c.1190, as a result of the bad conditions that German Crusaders suffered at the Siege of Acre. The order was therefore founded with both hospital and military duties. Knights had to be of exclusively German noble birth and were similar to the Templars in structure and pious behaviours. Based in Acre, the knights fought in Syria and Egypt, but eventually left to vigorously campaign in famous wars in Eastern Europe.

KNIGHTS OF SAINT THOMAS OF ACRE



ALTHOUGH MOST CRUSADERS WERE OF FRENCH OR GERMAN ORIGIN, THIS UNIQUE ORDER WAS ENGLISH AND FOUNDED DURING THE CAMPAIGNS OF RICHARD THE LIONHEART

During the Siege of Acre in 1191, the Dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral in London formed the order after burying the Christian dead and tending the wounded. It was dedicated to the famous Saint Thomas Becket of Canterbury and the order grew, with English monks establishing hospitals and churches in not just the Levant but also Cyprus, England and Ireland. It was militarised by the Bishop of Winchester during the Fifth Crusade, but the order occupied Acre for 100 years until the city's fall in 1291, where the master and nine other members were killed.

“HE IS A TRULY FEARLESS KNIGHT... FOR HIS SOUL IS PROTECTED BY THE ARMOUR OF HIS FAITH, JUST AS HIS BODY IS PROTECTED BY ARMOUR OF STEEL”

KNIGHTS HOSPITALER



OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE 'KNIGHTS OF THE HOSPITAL OF SAINT JOHN', THESE MEDICAL SOLDIERS HAVE LEFT AN ENDURING LEGACY

Even before the First Crusade, the Hospital of Saint John, next to the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, cared for the poor and sick pilgrims, but after 1099 its military functions became more prominent. By 1187, the Hospitallers controlled more than 20 fortresses in the Levant, including the huge castle at Krak des Chevaliers, but continued to carry out medical duties. They continued to fight Muslims in the Mediterranean long after the Crusades had finished, particularly at Malta. Even today, their legacy endures in the form of the Saint John Ambulance service.

Knights Hospitaller during the Crusades. Most military orders were originally founded to provide medical and charitable care for pilgrims

Krak des Chevaliers is one of the most impressive and well-preserved examples of Medieval castle building in the world



Images: Alamy

HOLY WARRIORS

The Crusades spawned a variety of commanders of varying qualities, religions and achievements including knights, sultans and even lepers and pirates

SALAH AD-DIN (SALADIN) THE HAMMER OF THE CRUSADERS

YEARS ACTIVE: 1182-93 COUNTRY: UPPER MESOPOTAMIA

Born in Tikrit (modern day Iraq) into a prominent Kurdish family, Saladin was trained in military matters by his uncle, Asad ad-Din Shirkuh, who was an important commander for the emir Nureddin. By the age of 31, in 1169, Saladin was the commander of all Syrian troops and vizier of Egypt. In the following years, northern Mesopotamia and, most importantly, Palestine came under his control. Generally known as the Sultan of Egypt, Saladin developed a reputation as a generous but firm ruler, and his every act was influenced by an unwavering devotion to jihad (holy war) and spreading the influence of Muslim institutions and power.

Militarily, he united and disciplined various Muslim factions, and in 1187, threw in his full strength against the Crusader kingdoms. On 4 July 1187, he achieved the greatest Islamic victory of the crusading era when he cunningly trapped and destroyed the exhausted and water-deprived army of the Kingdom of Jerusalem at the Battle of Hattin in northern

Palestine. The Christian forces were annihilated, and over the next three months, Saladin conquered many territories, including Acre, Beirut, Nazareth, Caesarea, Jaffa and Toron.

However, his greatest victory came on 2 October 1187 when he took Jerusalem. The city, which had been under Crusader control for 88 years, was religiously important to Muslims, Christians and Jews, but its capture by Saladin dealt a blow to the Crusaders from which they would never truly recover. Unlike the barbaric Christian conquest of 1099, the Muslim re-conquest was more civilised and Saladin spared the lives of the Christian population.

Despite this crowning triumph, Saladin could not take Tyre, and so the coastal fortress became the springboard for the Third Crusade in an attempted re-conquest of Jerusalem. The sultan fought the new Crusaders, especially Richard I, to the negotiating table and his enemies grew to admire his own brand of chivalry. Thanks to Saladin, Jerusalem remained in Muslim hands until 1917.



Saladin has been romanticised as a paragon of chivalry in the western world

GODFREY OF BOUILLON THE FIRST CRUSADING RULER OF JERUSALEM

YEARS ACTIVE: 1095-1100 COUNTRY: FRANCE

Godfrey was the son of the count of Boulogne, and in 1096, he joined the First Crusade along with his brothers Eustace and Baldwin. Godfrey was an important leader, providing considerable funds and soldiers.

He played a prominent part in the Crusader victories in Anatolia, at the Siege of Nicaea and the Battle of Dorylaeum. After taking part in the drawn-out, but ultimately successful, Siege of Antioch, Godfrey then took an active part in the Siege of Jerusalem.

On 15 July 1099, Godfrey and Eustace scaled the walls with a movable tower and were the first Crusaders to enter the city. While others massacred the inhabitants, Godfrey stripped to his undergarments and prayed at the Holy Sepulchre. When the siege was over, Godfrey was offered the crown of Jerusalem but, while he agreed to rule, he refused the title of king, and was instead called the 'protector of the Holy Sepulchre'. After beating back an Egyptian force, Jerusalem was secured for the Crusaders.

Left: Godfrey would pass away shortly after his moment of triumph in 1100 but the exact nature of his death, whether natural or something more sinister, is still uncertain



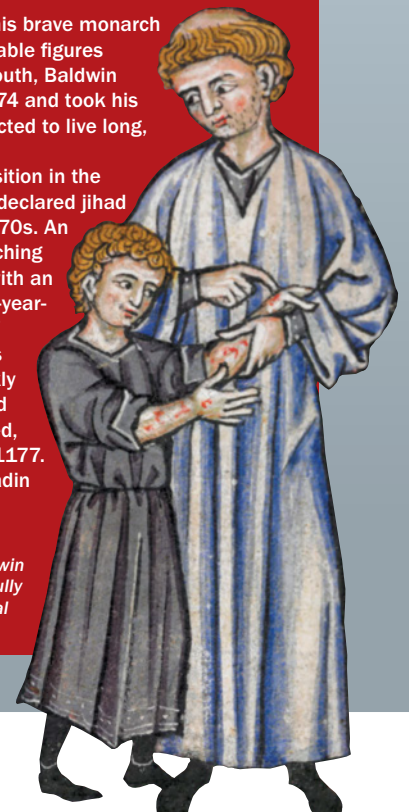
BALDWIN IV THE COURAGEOUS LEPER KING OF JERUSALEM

YEARS ACTIVE: 1174-85 COUNTRY: KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM

Although afflicted by a terrible disease, this brave monarch was nonetheless one of the most remarkable figures of his age. Diagnosed with leprosy as a youth, Baldwin became king of Jerusalem aged 13 in 1174 and took his majority two years later. He was not expected to live long, let alone succeed.

Saladin had been consolidating his position in the Muslim territories around Jerusalem and declared jihad against the Christian states in the late 1170s. An invasion soon followed, with Saladin marching north and preparing to besiege Ascalon with an overwhelming force. Nonetheless, the 16-year-old Baldwin rode to Ascalon with just 367 knights and got there before Saladin. This prompted the sultan to head for the weakly defended Jerusalem, but Baldwin followed him and despite being highly outnumbered, won a complete victory at Montgisard in 1177. Although the king died aged only 23, Saladin never dared face Baldwin in battle again.

Right: William of Tyre discovers the young Baldwin IV's leprosy. Baldwin managed to rule successfully despite the debilitating symptoms and the social stigma then attached to lepers



RAYNALD DE CHÂTILLON
THE RECKLESS DESTROYER OF THE KINGDOM OF JERUSALEM
YEARS ACTIVE: C.1153-87 COUNTRY: FRANCE

Born in France, Raynald arrived in Palestine to begin his highly controversial career. He married the princess of Antioch and soon gained a reputation for cruelty when he plundered Cyprus, but in 1160-61 he was captured in a raid and was held in a Muslim prison for 16 years.

Now a widower, he remarried into wealth and became an actively offensive Crusader who attacked Muslim caravans and even launched a pirate raid against Islamic ports in the Red Sea. Saladin was particularly enraged when Raynald threatened to destroy Mecca and he twice besieged the Crusaders at Kerak between 1183-84, which Baldwin IV had to relieve.

Upon Baldwin's death, Raynald destabilised the kingdom by breaking a truce with Saladin, attacking a caravan and refusing to return the sultan's captured sister. War was declared and Raynald was captured at the Battle of Hattin. Saladin personally executed him for breaking his oath in front of King Guy of Jerusalem.



Above: Saladin's execution of Raynald was controversial as it could have broken the strict hospitality laws in place at the time



Above: The Battle of Inab in 1149 was a significant moment in the Islamic resurgence against the Crusader states

NUR AD-DIN
THE SCOURGE OF ANTIOCH AND A UNIFIER OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD
YEARS ACTIVE: 1146-74 COUNTRY: SYRIA

After the capture of Jerusalem in 1099, the Muslim world took time to assert itself against the burgeoning Crusader states. The first Islamic leader to effectively stand up to the Franks was Imad ad-Din Zengi, the emir of Aleppo and Mosul, whose disciplined army took the Crusader city of Edessa in 1144.

Although Zengi was assassinated in 1145, his son Nur ad-Din carried on his work. For the first time since the Christian conquest, the Muslims became united and Nur ad-Din immediately attacked the Principality of Antioch and united the Syrian cities of Aleppo and Damascus. After the failure of the Second Crusade, in order to recover Edessa, Nur ad-Din won a great victory at the Battle of Inab on 29 June 1149, where Prince Raymond of Antioch and his army was destroyed. Antioch was deprived of an effective ruler and Nur ad-Din was able to capture towns in the principality. His successes would greatly influence Saladin decades later.

“FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE THE CHRISTIAN CONQUEST, THE MUSLIMS BECAME UNITED”

BAYEZID I THE VICTOR OF NICOPOLIS AND THE FINAL DESTROYER OF THE CRUSADES
YEARS ACTIVE: 1389-1403 COUNTRY: OTTOMAN EMPIRE

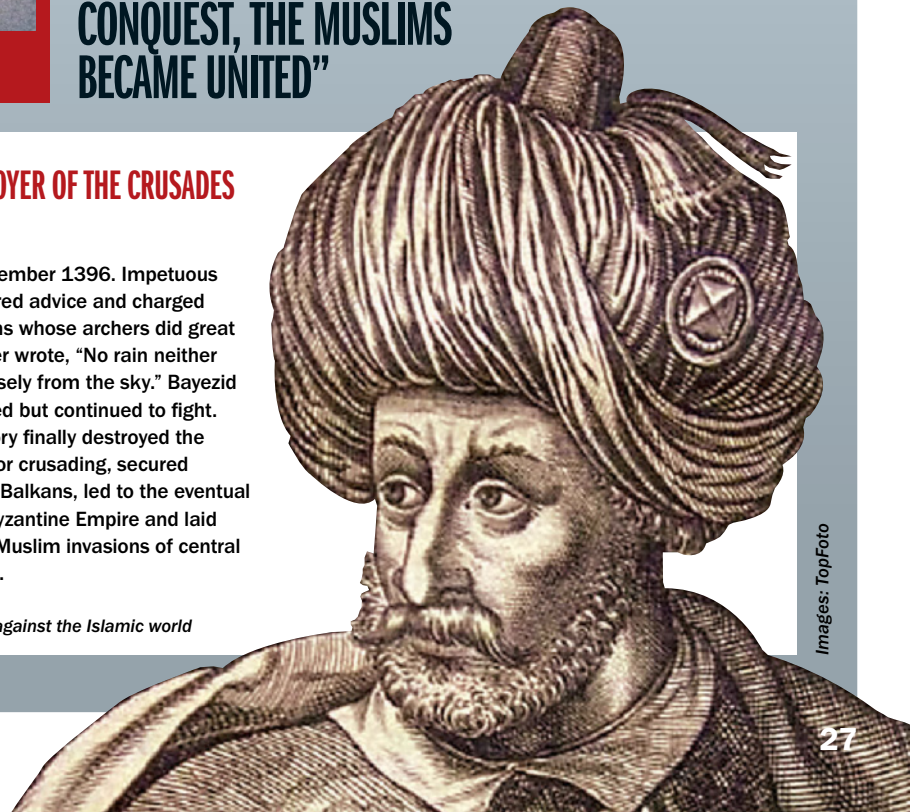
Nicknamed 'The Thunderbolt', Bayezid was sultan of the Ottoman Empire between 1389-1402 and his successes pushed Islamic rule and influence into Europe. In the early years of his reign, he conducted campaigns that seized vast swathes of territory in the Balkans, including Tirvona and northern Greece.

After blockading Constantinople, Bayezid invaded Hungary in 1395, which resulted in a largely French-led European coalition against him. However, Bayezid inflicted a decisive defeat on the Crusaders at the Battle of Nicopolis in

Bulgaria on 22 September 1396. Impetuous French knights ignored advice and charged against the Ottomans whose archers did great damage. A chronicler wrote, "No rain neither hail can flow so densely from the sky." Bayezid himself was wounded but continued to fight.

His crushing victory finally destroyed the European appetite for crusading, secured Ottoman rule of the Balkans, led to the eventual destruction of the Byzantine Empire and laid the foundations for Muslim invasions of central Europe for centuries.

Right: Bayezid I's great victory at Nicopolis destroyed the last Crusading coalition against the Islamic world



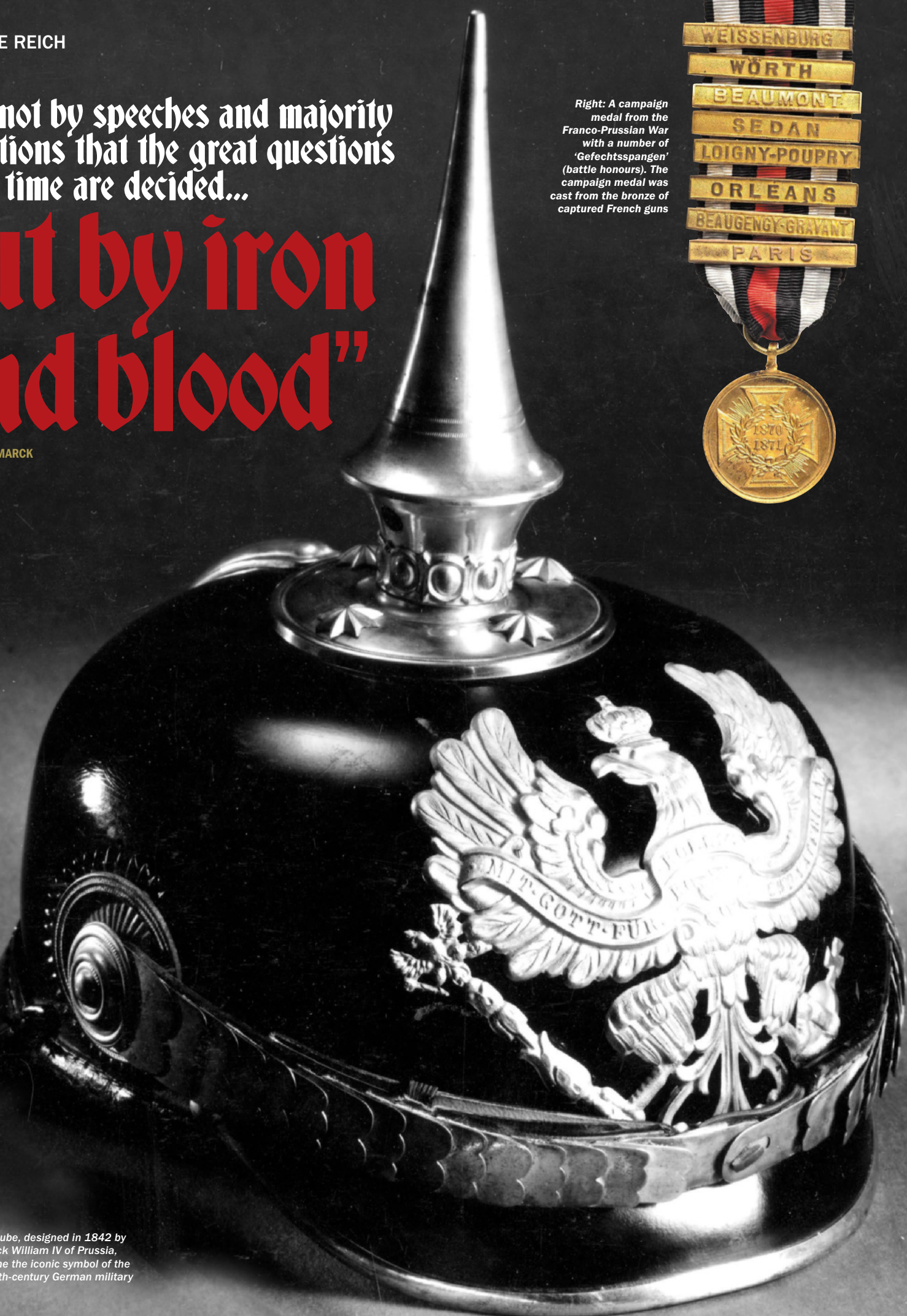
Images: TopFoto

“It is not by speeches and majority resolutions that the great questions of the time are decided...

but by iron and blood”

- OTTO VON BISMARCK

Right: A campaign medal from the Franco-Prussian War with a number of 'Gefechtsspangen' (battle honours). The campaign medal was cast from the bronze of captured French guns



The Pickelhaube, designed in 1842 by King Frederick William IV of Prussia, would become the iconic symbol of the 19th and 20th-century German military

RISE OF THE REICH



In July 1870, Europe held its breath as the forces of the North German Confederation and their allies moved across the French border. The war would decide whether the dream of a unified German state would come true, or if France would remain the dominant power in central Europe **WORDS ROBIN SCHÄFER**

In the 190 days following their invasion of France, German forces spearheaded by Prussia steamrolled through the country, defeating the French army in 15 large battles and more than 100 smaller engagements. Finally, at the Battle of Sedan on 1 September 1870, the French emperor, Napoleon III, was forced into a dramatic surrender after a military disaster that precipitated revolution in Paris and led to the establishment of the Third French Republic. In late spring, the new French government had no option other than to ask for peace and to agree to sign the humiliating Treaty of Frankfurt, which ended the war on 10 May 1871.

The rapid and decisive German victory stunned neutral observers, many of whom had expected that a French victory would follow a long, drawn-out war. There was a range of strategic, tactical and technological advantages that led the German coalition to victory and ultimately to the creation of a unified German nation.

“Eternal peace is a dream – and not even a beautiful one”

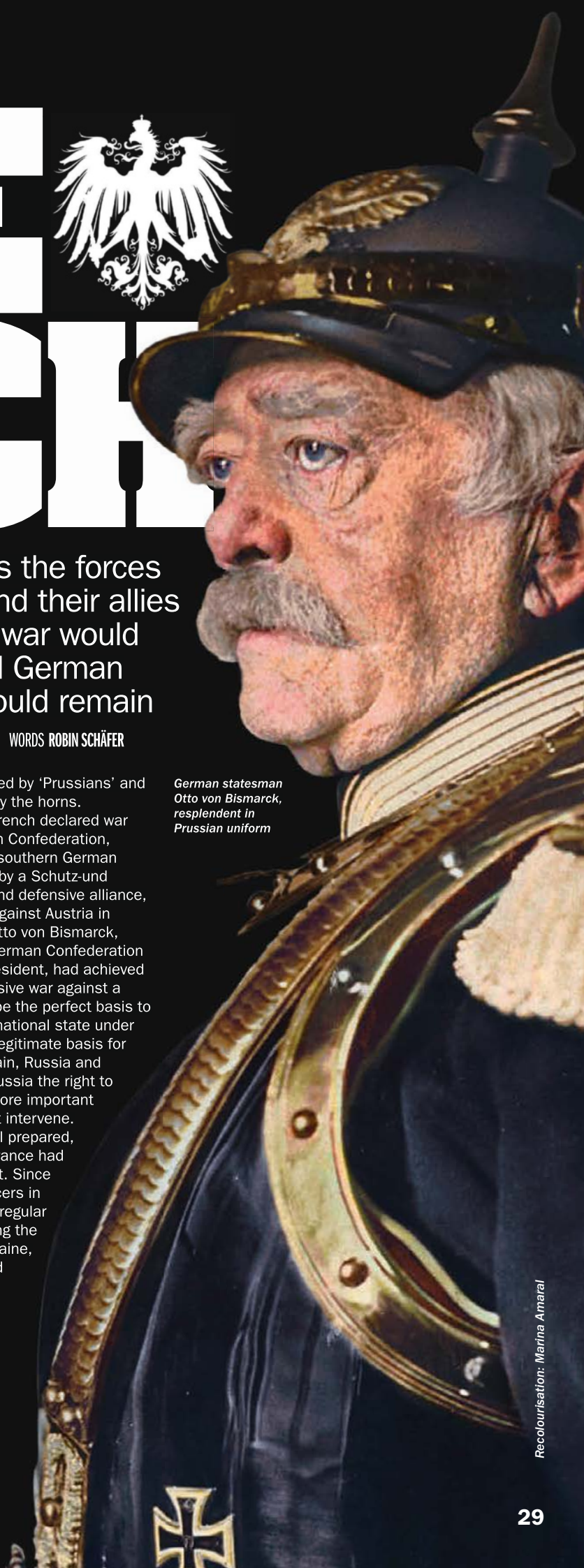
After Prussia's victory over Austria in 1866, a war against France seemed unavoidable as the defeat of the Habsburg Empire had relativised France's position of political power. Aiming to regain its prestige, France called for 'Revanche pour Sadova', revenge for Sadova, a little village on the battlefield of Königgrätz – the decisive battle of the war against Austria – after which the battle had been named in French historiography. When a Hohenzollern prince was about to take the vacant Spanish throne in the summer of 1870, France saw itself in the

danger of being surrounded by 'Prussians' and decided to take the bull by the horns.

On 19 July 1870, the French declared war against the North German Confederation, automatically pulling the southern German states, bound to Prussia by a Schutz-und Trutzbündnis (offensive and defensive alliance, formed after the victory against Austria in 1866) into the conflict. Otto von Bismarck, chancellor of the North German Confederation and Prussian minister president, had achieved his goal. Fighting a defensive war against a foreign aggressor would be the perfect basis to create a unified German national state under Prussian supremacy – a legitimate basis for the new state. Great Britain, Russia and Austria could not deny Prussia the right to defend itself and, even more important for Bismarck, they did not intervene.

Prussia's army was well prepared, as the military might of France had always presented a threat. Since 1860, Prussian staff officers in civilian clothes had been regular visitors to France, mapping the terrain of Alsace and Lorraine, studying fortifications and calculating the stocks of forage and food of every town and village. Plans for mobilising in case of war against France had been prepared and ready since 1868, and when it came to war they were swiftly executed. On 16 July 1870, mobilisation

German statesman Otto von Bismarck, resplendent in Prussian uniform



began in Prussia, Bavaria and Baden while a day later Württemberg started to rally its men under the flags.

The ranks of the German conscript armies were filled with reservists, and within only two weeks, all 13 Prussian/North German corps had reached their war strength. On 3 August, 1.1 million men had been called up, with more than 450,000 of them gathered in their assembly areas between the Meuse, Saar and Rhine. On 12 August, their numbers had swelled to 640,000 men, and to serve them and the guns were 170,000 horses. This was a logistical masterpiece and a triumph of the line of communication department of the German General Staff.

While the German war machine gathered to 'seek the enemy main force, find it and attack it' – executing a war plan that had been in existence since 1869 – for the French, a continuous neglect of logistical and operational planning, as well as an ignorant reliance on the supposed superiority of its professional army, threw France into chaos. The once-strong nation had lost the initiative even before the respective armies had met in battle.

Three German armies finally crossed the border into France, quickly ending French dreams of launching a decisive

Right: An old-pattern Prussian infantry officer's sword, taken as a souvenir during the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71)



This painting of the Battle of Villiers was directly inspired by the artist Edouard Detaille's experiences in the Franco-Prussian War



offensive into German territory – Field Marshal Karl Friedrich von Steinmetz, Prince Friedrich Karl Nikolaus of Prussia and Crown Prince Wilhelm of Prussia led the armies. Completely outmanoeuvred by flexible and tenacious German leadership co-ordinated by the Prussian General Staff under Helmuth von Moltke, France took severe blows, losing the opening battles of Weissenburg (4 August 1870), Wörth (6 August 1870) and Spichern (6 August 1870) in quick succession.

Forced to pull its field army out of Alsace, control of the Rhine valley was left to the German 3rd Army, which immediately moved south, occupying Alsace and laying siege to the fortress of Belfort. French armies were repeatedly outflanked, forced

into panicked retreats and partial capitulations. After achieving another victory in the Battle of Mars-la-Tour, Prussia blocked the French routes of retreat towards Verdun, forcing them into battle at Gravelotte. Defeated again, the Rhine Army withdrew into the safety of the fortress belt of Metz, where they were surrounded by the First Army under Prince Friedrich Karl and the Second Army under General Edwin von Manteuffel on 20 August 1870.

Under pressure from the French cabinet and a number of high-ranking military officials, a relief force was set into motion consisting of troops from Chalon under the command of Marshal MacMahon. Knowing the risk he was facing, MacMahon left Reims on 23 August 1870, marching his troops via Montemédy along the



MUSTERING FOR WAR

“PRUSSIA IS NOT A COUNTRY THAT HAS AN ARMY, BUT AN ARMY THAT HAS A COUNTRY IN WHICH IT IS JUST BILLETED”

– HONORÉ GABRIEL DE RIQUETI, COMTE DE MIRABEAU

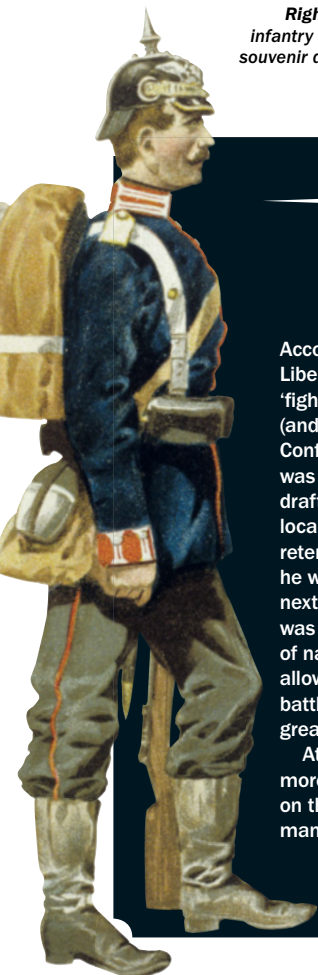
According to the principles created during the Wars of Liberation (1813-15) the 'task of the army' was not to 'fight wars', but to 'train the nation for war'. In Prussia (and indeed all other armies of the North-German Confederation), every young man from the age of 20 was liable to do compulsory military service. After being drafted, he served for three years on active duty with his local ('hometown') regiment, after which he could request retention on active duty or accept release, in which case he would be placed in that regiment's reserve pool for the next four years. As part of the army's formal reserve, he was liable to be mobilised as part of his regiment in time of national emergency. The reserve pool thus formed allowed German armies to mobilise more soldiers for battle than France, despite the fact that France had a greater population.

At the opening stages of the Franco-Prussian War, more than 460,000 German soldiers were assembled on the border with France. On the other side, France managed to gather only 270,000 men to face them,

after having lost more than 100,000 stragglers by faulty planning before even a single shot had been fired in anger. Prussia recruited and mobilised on a territorial basis, which gave it an immense advantage over the extraterritorial French system.

Prussia was subdivided into recruitment circles (Kreise). Each circle was assigned to a Prussian Corps that recruited the men for its regiments only from the villages, towns and cities of its own recruitment circle, making German military service in both war and peacetime a very localised affair. When the reserves were called in during times of war, most German soldiers did not have to travel more than one or two days to reach the garrison of their home regiments. In France, men often had to travel from one side of the country to the other on journeys that could take more than a week to get to their respective regiments. Their system gave Prussia the ability to wage war with much larger nations, sending its troops deep into enemy territory before the foe had time to fully mobilise his forces, a key element of victory over both Austria (in 1866) and France.

Left: The standard uniform for the Prussian Grenadier Guard, this would have been worn in combat



Right: This Prussian Grenadier Guard stands proudly in his dress uniform





THE FRENCH AND GERMAN ARMIES

“THE FRENCH ARMY IS TOO DRUNK, TOO OLD AND TOO CYNICAL TO DEFEND THE NATION”

— GENERAL LOUIS-JULES TROCHU

The victory of the German conscript armies over the heavily favoured, professional and better-armed French forces stunned international observers, and soon the armies of the world began to take heed of the reasons that had allowed the unthinkable to happen. If wars were decided in terms of quality of arms and materiel, the outcome of the Franco-Prussian War might have been a different one. Even though the ancient bronze guns of the French artillery arm were drastically outclassed by modern Krupp breech loaders, the French Chassepot service rifle was without doubt the most modern in the world, and with the introduction of the Mitrailleuse, the French army fielded the first early rapid-fire machine gun. Yet the best weapon is only as good as the soldier who wields it. Napoleon's grognards, the grumblers, had once been the French nation's pride and glory but in the second half of the 19th century, their dominance had come to an end.

The French army was ripe with shortcomings, a fact that their military and political leaders, blinded by past glories and keen to masquerade their own failings, had chosen to ignore. Organisationally inept, strategically incompetent and intellectually

sub-par, French officers commanded 'professional' soldiers who did not care a lot about the fate of their emperor or the Second Empire. French soldiers, often drawn from the dregs of society at a very young age, were known to be coarse, ill-educated and undisciplined. Hard drinking at a massive scale was common as a means to ease the boredom of garrison life. Pay and chances of promotion were poor and did much to discourage many capable young men from joining the army.

As study and zeal were no guarantee for advancement, idleness was common in all ranks. More than 90 per cent of the French army were conscripts, men unfortunate enough to draw a bad number in the ballots that were held annually to determine those eligible to serve, and who were too poor to afford to buy themselves out of the army. Military service was a burden borne by the

poor, which engendered a deep-rooted sense of class injustice within all ranks. Due to the lack of advancement and low pay, the prospects of serving attracted few officer candidates.

By 1870, more than two-thirds of French officers had been promoted from the ranks; a severe problem as many suffered from a low level of education. The French Army suffered from 'old age': having been promoted through the ranks, the average age of a lieutenant in 1870 was 37. Much to the amazement of their Prussian counterparts, French junior officers captured during the campaign were often in their 50s and 60s, by then physically unfit and intellectually apathetic. Being unable to integrate themselves back into society after a long period of service, most French soldiers reenlisted, resulting in increasingly old and disillusioned personnel.

“If wars were decided in terms of quality of arms and materiel, the outcome of the Franco-Prussian War might have been a different one”



This painting by Wilfrid Beauquesne is of an unnamed confrontation but captures the chaotic and savage nature of the war



ARTILLERY

“PRUSSIANS ARE HATCHED FROM CANNONBALLS”

— NAPOLEON BONAPARTE

While the French had the advantage in their Chassepot rifles, the Prussians had an advantage in artillery. After the Austro-Prussian War of 1866, units had been re-equipped with modern Krupp-made steel-rifled breech-loading guns able to fire percussion-fused shells. There were two main calibres of field artillery: the 4-Pfünder-Feldkanone C/64, which fired a four-pound shell with a calibre of just under eight centimetres and equipped both the field and horse artillery, and the 6-Pfünder-Feldkanone C/61 (firing a slightly heavier shell of nine centimetre calibre). The maximum range of the C/64 gun was 4,600 metres. The Prussian train of heavy siege artillery, with huge guns up to a calibre of 21 centimetres, was of the same high quality. The modern Krupp breech-loaders had twice the rate of fire, a third greater range and a lot more accuracy and destructive power than the antiquated French muzzleloaders firing quite unreliable time-fused shells. The latest technology was matched by Prussia's artillery tactics, which turned Krupp's lethal design into the dominating weapon on the battlefield.

German guns were grouped into highly dynamic Artillerie-Massen – independently acting batteries of guns that massed where their deadly fire was needed, before limbering up and moving elsewhere. The size of these battery groups was just as flexible, guns massed up with others as the situation allowed and demanded it. Auftragstaktik, or Direktive Führung, guaranteed that independently acting battery commanders would not march uncontrolled

towards the sound of the guns, leaving their comrades of the infantry and cavalry unsupported in critical moments. They knew the general plans of battle and they would be fighting in accordance to the plans and aims of the infantry.

While the French artillery would often fire at extreme ranges, Prussian gunners would wilfully share the dangers of the infantry, always trying to shorten ranges to improve accuracy even more. In many cases, audacious battery commanders positioned their guns so close to the enemy that they began to take casualties from French rifle fire. Moving tenaciously and opportunistically, batteries swarmed around their targets, subjecting them to lethal crossfire from two or three directions at once, causing havoc and destruction in the French ranks. Some battles during the Franco-Prussian War saw artillery account for more than 70 per cent of French casualties, while most Prussian casualties were inflicted by rifle fire.

Right: Breech-loading cannon could be operated and fired by just two crewmen and were more reliable in prolonged bombardments

“The modern Krupp breech-loaders had twice the rate of fire, a third greater range and a lot more accuracy and destructive power than the antiquated French muzzleloaders”

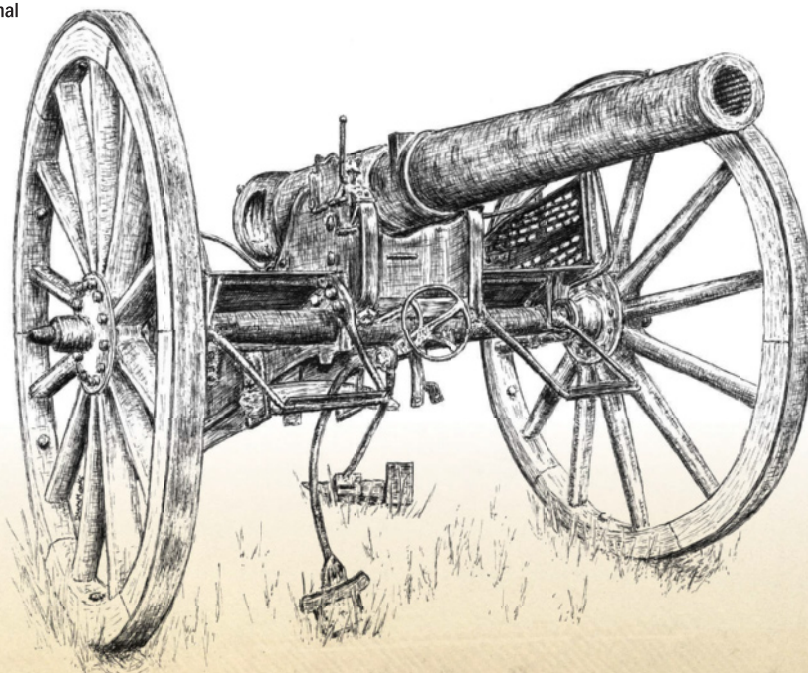


Illustration: Dawn Monks



Prussian artillery bombarding Paris, 5-26 January 1871



THE GENERAL STAFF SYSTEM

**“ACHIEVE MUCH, BUT DO NOT STAND OUT; BE MORE THAN YOU SEEM:
EVERY GENERAL STAFF OFFICER MUST TAKE THIS AS HIS MOTTO”**

- FIELD MARSHAL ALFRED GRAF VON SCHLIEFFEN

The Great General Staff in Berlin, directed by General Helmuth von Moltke, comprised 60 brilliant officers, the best and brightest students of the Prussian War Academy. It had originally been created to study previous military operations, with the aim of learning from past mistakes. Famed for the precision and accuracy of its planning, the General Staff proved to be extremely effective, much in contrast to the traditional French school.

Responsibility for intelligence, operational and logistical planning were incorporated into the staff structure, professionalising the Prussian armed forces to a much greater extent than that of their French opponents. The chief of the General Staff, who was effectively acting as commander-in-chief of the Prussian Army, acted independently of the minister of war and answered only to the Prussian king. Being a permanent military organisation free from any kind of political intervention, the Prussian

General Staff had the power and abilities to react quickly and efficiently to any situational changes – whereas its French counterpart was merely an extended arm of the war ministry and as such, was always subjected to political pressure.

Finally, the Prussian military and civilian education system was probably the most advanced in the world, its officers chosen not by class or social status, but on the basis of merit, and thereafter these men were constantly trained to exhibit initiative and independent thinking. Moltke, who never hesitated to sack an incapable commander, closely monitored the officers' exploits. The French Army, on the other hand, suffered from a system that subdued the development of any kind of intellectual capacity within its officer class, resulting in an appalling level of education even at staff and high command level.

Prussian officers pictured after the Austro-Prussian War (1866), including Paul von Hindenberg



Belgian border to the vicinity of Metz. Here, at the Battle of Beaumont on 30 August 1870, elements of the German 3rd and 4th Armies defeated a corps of MacMahon's army, which now retreated towards Sedan where it was beaten on 1 September 1870.

During the Battle of Sedan, Emperor Napoleon III was captured and the French army routed – the German victory led France into political chaos and sent the Second French Empire into a decline from which it would never recover. Nevertheless, from a purely military perspective, Sedan had not been a decisive battle. The demise of the Armée de Chalons and the encirclement of the French Rhine Army in Metz threw French military command into crisis. Except for the French 13th Corps, which had managed to escape Sedan, France's once impressive field army had been knocked out. Prussian General Staff calculated that it was highly improbable that the French government, having only about 100,000 trained soldiers and officers left at its disposal, would be able to mobilise troops in sufficient numbers in order to change the course of the war. A thrust towards Paris was decided upon, with the aims to end the war and enforce territorial and financial demands.

The resulting Siege of Paris lasted from 19 September 1870 to 28 January 1871, and led both to the defeat of the newly constituted French Third Republic and the Proclamation of the German Empire. By 19 September 1870, Paris had been completely surrounded. Moltke

kept the besieging units out of the range of the antiquated French fortress artillery, and formed a reserve XI Corps in Versailles to shield the besieging force from an expected French relief attack from the rear. General Trochu, president of the Government of National Defence (and after Napoleon III's capture, France's de facto head of state), had little trust in the ability of the National Guard, which made up half of the total strength of the city's defenders and left the initiative to the Germans in the hopes that they would waste their forces on the formidable city defences. They were false hopes.

After it became clear that General Moltke was far too experienced a soldier to waste his army on Paris's defences, Trochu changed plans and launched a sortie to break the German encirclement. On 30 September 1870, the German XI Corps repelled about 20,000 French soldiers under General Vinoy. A suggestion by Chancellor Otto von Bismarck to bombard Paris with artillery to hasten its surrender was rejected by the German high command, as it would have hit the civilian population, broken the rules of war and, even more importantly, antagonised third-party countries like Britain to side against Germany. Not only that, but a quick German victory here, with no wearing down battle, could have

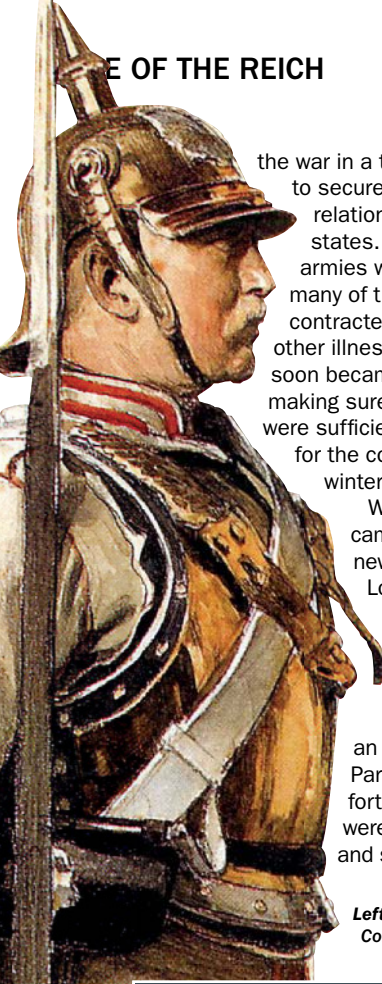
left France with a mass of freshly raised and undefeated troops with which it would be possible to wage another war. The French troops would need to be destroyed first, while Paris would be starved into surrender.

The citizens of Paris suffered from the effects of the siege and morale sank to an all-time low when the garrison of Metz finally surrendered to the Germans on 25 October 1870. To raise morale, General Trochu decided to stake everything on one card and to launch an army of 80,000 under command of General Ducrot, against the Prussians.

If he had succeeded, all German troops south and west of Paris would have been cut off from their supply lines, giving the attackers a chance to link up with the French Army of the Loire, thereby making a continuation of the siege difficult. During the following Battle of Villiers (30 November – 2 December 1870), the French army managed to take and hold a number of strategically important locations. However, on 2 December, a counter attack by the Württemberg Division threw Ducrot's troops back behind defensive lines.

During the winter months, tensions began to rise within the Prussian headquarters. For Bismarck, Paris was the key to break the power of republican rule in France, its fall likely to end

**“French troops would need to be destroyed first,
while Paris would be starved into surrender”**



the war in a timely manner and to secure Prussia's peaceful relationship with neutral states. But the besieging armies were now suffering, many of the troops had contracted tuberculosis and other illnesses, and Moltke soon became worried about making sure that his armies were sufficiently supplied for the coming cold winter months.

While the Loire campaign against the newly raised French Loire-Army continued, Moltke and General von Blumenthal, chief of staff of 3rd Army, were busy conducting an orderly siege at Paris. The independent forts around the capital were to be surrounded and starved out with

Left: A Prussian Garde du Corps cuirassier, c. 1870-71



The Declaration of German Unification was made in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles, January 1871.

the intention of keeping the German casualties as low as possible. There were fears that the German economy would be unable to bear the strain resulting from a longer continuation of the war and that a drawn-out siege would persuade the French forces that victory was still a possibility. An extended siege might also give France a chance to restore its armies and to persuade neutral countries, like Great Britain, to side with them in their war against Prussia.

On 3 January 1871, after the positioning of heavy siege artillery, the Prussian King – on Bismarck's advice – finally agreed to the

shelling of the city, focusing on the forts on the southern front. Over the next 23 days, more than 12,000 shells were fired into the forts and the surrounding areas of the city. Just 15 days later on 18 January 1871, while the siege continued, Bismarck proclaimed the establishment of the German Empire at Versailles. German unification had at last been achieved on Bismarck's terms and under a constitutional arrangement that left Prussia dominant and ultimate power in the hands of the king of Prussia, who had now also become the German Emperor.



TRAINING AND MORALE

'LEARN TO SUFFER WITHOUT SNIVELLING'
- A PRUSSIAN MOTTO

Even though most German soldiers of both the Prussian and the other armies of the North German confederation were essentially civilians in uniform, conscripted and trained on a 'short-service' basis, their three years of service were highly intense. Days were structured into a never-ending succession of mental and physical training elements, leaving a recruit only the minimal amount of time to rest and sleep as necessary.

Added to the incessant drill, a special focus was put on practising small-unit fighting in the

open and live firing drills. No other army of the period conducted more live firing target practice than that of Prussia. Recruits had constant access to their rifles and were expected to practise drill and cleaning routine on them in their spare time. In times without physical drill, recruits received lectures in the Prussian virtues of obedience, order, subordination, discipline and loyalty up to the point of self-abnegation.

Large unit field manoeuvres were held at least once a year, giving both officers and

men an opportunity to get used to conditions on the battlefield. In the German states, primary school service was compulsory. Being both literate and numerate, all German soldiers could be expected to conduct complex tactical exercises and to be able to work with printed regulations, maps and written orders. Training, education and indoctrination forged the young soldiers of the Prussian armies into a highly efficient, ferocious instrument of war.

Baden infantry are here depicted charging during the Battle of Lisaine, 17 January 1871

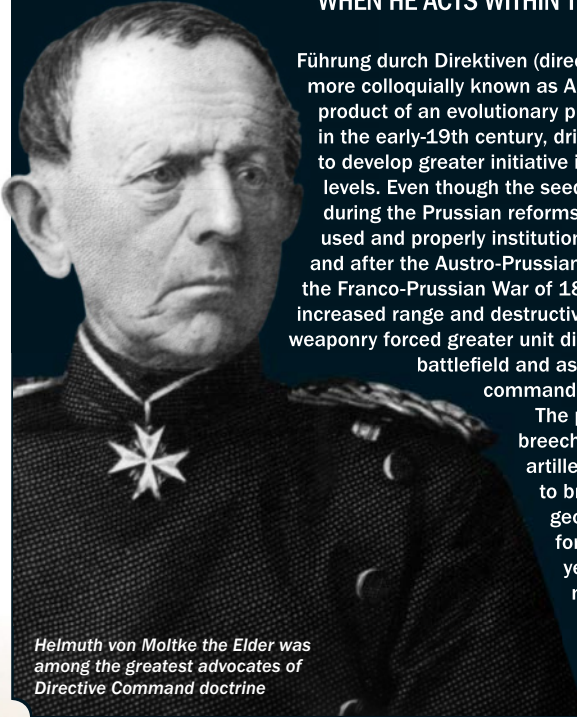




AUFTRAGSTAKTIK (DIRECTIVE COMMAND)

“DIVERSE ARE THE SITUATIONS UNDER WHICH AN OFFICER HAS TO ACT ON THE BASIS OF HIS OWN VIEW OF THE SITUATION. IT WOULD BE WRONG IF HE HAD TO WAIT FOR ORDERS AT TIMES WHEN NO ORDERS CAN BE GIVEN. BUT MOST PRODUCTIVE ARE HIS ACTIONS WHEN HE ACTS WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF HIS SENIOR COMMANDER’S INTENT”

– FIELD MARSHAL HELMUTH VON MOLTKE



Helmuth von Moltke the Elder was among the greatest advocates of Directive Command doctrine

Führung durch Direktiven (directive command), more colloquially known as Auftragstaktik, was the product of an evolutionary process that started in the early-19th century, driven by the necessity to develop greater initiative in commanders at all levels. Even though the seeds for it were sown during the Prussian reforms of 1807, it was first used and properly institutionalised both during and after the Austro-Prussian War of 1866 and the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, where the increased range and destructive power of modern weaponry forced greater unit dispersion across the battlefield and as a direct result loss of command control.

The power of rapid-firing, breech-loading rifles and artillery made it necessary to break up the tight geometrical troop formations of earlier years. Prussia’s tactics made maximum use of these new technologies and firepower. They involved

decentralised small units deployed in a system of broad skirmish lines, relying on rifle power utilised against the enemy’s flanks – tactics that emphasised speed and tactical freedom, even for junior commanders and NCOs.

It is debatable whether Helmuth von Moltke, the Elder or Scharnhorst, can be named the ‘father’ of Auftragstaktik, yet it is clear that it was Moltke who established and enforced it as official doctrine. It was first stipulated in the drill regulations of 1888, which laid down that commanders should give subordinates general directions of what was to be done, allowing them freedom to determine how to do it, stimulating the development of the ‘thinking leader’, capable to make tactical decisions on his own.

By 1870, every German officer and NCO had it hammered into him repeatedly that they were responsible for getting results, not for simply following orders, and that obeying orders was never an excuse for failure. If they saw a problem developing, it was each individual’s responsibility to see that something was done about it – no matter what. In the battles of the Franco-Prussian War, this sometimes led to critical situations when commanders independently decided to attack strong enemy positions in costly frontal assaults, but in general, it gave the Prussian army the edge over its French opponents. Auftragstaktik permitted decentralisation. Prussian/German commanders, having been thoroughly briefed on the aims of the battle, could operate without direct command and while physically isolated from one another, however, at the same time they were jointly fighting and struggling toward a common objective.

On 19 January 1871, the prince of Prussia easily thwarted a final French breakthrough attempt, and six days later, the Prussian king finally gave in to Bismarck’s pressure and ordered Moltke to consult with him for all future operations. Bismarck’s first order was to bombard the centre of Paris with heavy siege artillery. On 28 January 1871, Paris capitulated and a three-week armistice was signed, during which the country would decide whether the

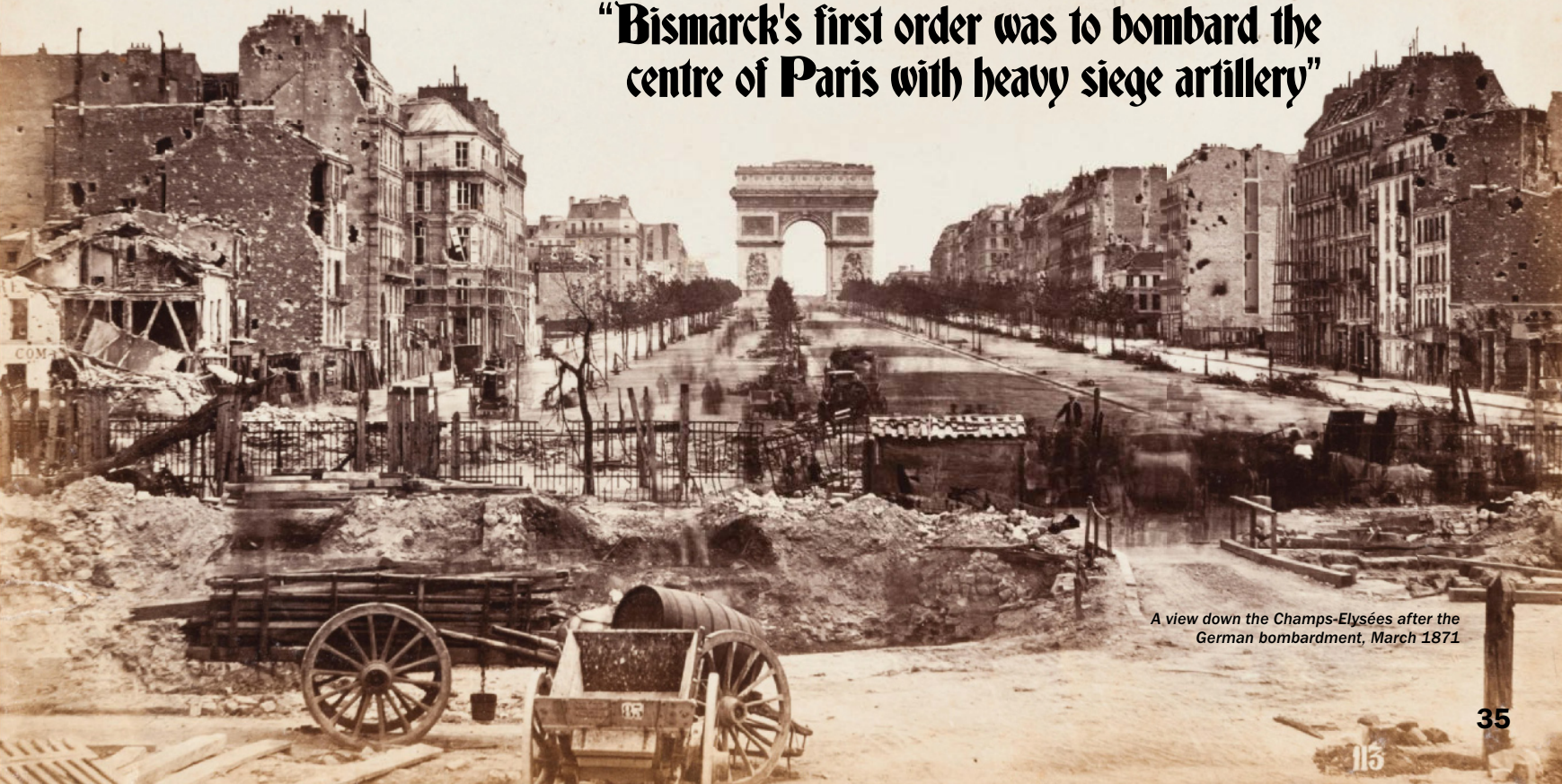
war would continue, or whether France would capitulate to Prussian demands.

On 8 February, with German forces occupying much of the country, France went to elect a National Assembly to decide the issue of war and peace. The result was clear and decisive; on 19 May 1871, a preliminary peace agreement signed at Versailles was confirmed in the Treaty of Frankfurt. Germany took Alsace-Lorraine, while German troops staged a

triumphal victory parade through Paris. France agreed to a 5 billion franc indemnity, more than twice the actual cost of war, while German troops would remain in occupation of north-east France until it was paid off. The Franco-Prussian War, undoubtedly the most important geopolitical event of the second half of the 19th century, had come to an end. The effects of this conflict would be felt around the world, and indeed into the next century.

Images: Alamy, Getty, TopFoto

“Bismarck's first order was to bombard the centre of Paris with heavy siege artillery”



A view down the Champs-Élysées after the German bombardment, March 1871



WWII'S MOUNTAIN APOCALYPSE

MONTE CASSINO

In 1944, Allied soldiers from across the world assembled to take part in a brutal battle to open the road to Rome and push the Germans out of Italy – among them was Private Theo Davies

WORDS TOM GARNER

Central Italy, 1944, and in the dead of night a Welsh infantryman called Theo Davies and his British comrades head for a location that is ominously called 'Hangman's Hill'. It is part of an attempt to rescue a dozen trapped soldiers, but out of nowhere explosions roar all around the Tommies. They have accidentally walked into a minefield and Davies is wounded across the face by flying debris. The order is given to retreat and the British hurry back to their own position at Castle Hill. This desperate situation is but one of many incidents fought in and around promontories south of Rome, but always looming above is a striking mound of rock that is crowned by a once beautiful monastery: Monte Cassino.

The battles in this area were some of the most intense and bloody of World War II. Between January and May 1944, Allied armies of many nationalities desperately fought to

dislodge the German forces that were based in and around the monastery. If Monte Cassino could be taken, the road to Rome would be open and the push north could continue. Private Theo Davies was just one of 240,000 Allied soldiers who fought at Monte Cassino and saw significant action. Now, at 92 years old, he recalls his violent experiences fighting at the heart of the struggle to defeat the Axis in Italy.

A bad start

The Italian Campaign of 1943-45 is mired in debate and controversy, from Allied disagreements about strategy and objectives to its usefulness to the war as a whole. What is undisputed though, are the grim fighting conditions that the Allied soldiers had to endure once they landed, first in Sicily and then on the Italian mainland itself. Although Winston Churchill described Italy as the "soft underbelly

of Europe" it would be prove to be the complete opposite, particularly at Monte Cassino.

For Theo Davies, his own road to Monte Cassino was short. Aged only 18, he found himself conscripted into the British Army, "I was called up in early 1943 and did my initial training at Brecon. I was sent to Shrewsbury for my infantry training where they put me in the Shropshire Light Infantry. I did advanced training in Norfolk and the next thing I knew I was going abroad. At the start of September, we went on a convoy into the Mediterranean. About halfway across, six Welsh boys, including myself, were picked out and told that we were no longer in the Shropshires but were now in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. We had been transferred as reinforcements. The whole idea was that you had to be placed in regiments, but then you were sent to wherever you were needed. In some cases you stayed, but it wasn't to be for us."

"ALLIED ARMIES OF MANY NATIONALITIES DESPERATELY FOUGHT TO DISLODGE THE GERMAN FORCES THAT WERE BASED IN AND AROUND THE MONASTERY"

New Zealand soldiers search a demolished house for snipers during the first battle in January 1944

Theo Davies, now aged 92, was only 19 years old when he fought at Monte Cassino and was wounded three times during the Italian Campaign

WWII'S MOUNTAIN APOCALYPSE

In the final months of 1943, the Allies had managed to land successfully at Salerno and were pushing their way northwards towards Rome. General Harold Alexander's 15th Army Group and the US Fifth Army were attacking up the west side of the peninsula, while the British Eighth Army attacked in parallel along the Adriatic coast. The advance was terrible on both sides of the peninsula. The German commander in Italy, Field Marshal Albert Kesselring, was greatly aided by geography and decided to make the Allies fight all the way. The advance was hindered by an endless succession of deep, fast-flowing rivers, muddy valleys and high, rugged hills that ran east and west of the Apennine Mountains. This was ideal defensive terrain for the Germans and conditions worsened with the onset of winter.

Davies's regiment was part of Eighth Army and he remembers the winter of 1943-44, "We landed in the southern part of Italy and went up the east coast on the Adriatic side. We were as far as the River Sangro by December 1943, but things were getting worse from September. We had a terrific amount of rain; people don't believe how much mud there was. The conditions were horrible." Among the quagmire, Davies was wounded for the first time, "I was wounded with a load of metal in my arm, it wasn't a good start." Once he had recovered, Davies spent January-February 1944 in snowy conditions in the mountains above the River Sangro but then fell ill, "I went down with malaria. The medics reckoned it was because we were sleeping in barns that had beetles in the hay. Luckily, I didn't have it seriously and recovered pretty quickly."

Despite being wounded and contracting malaria, Davies still had to fight and he took a pragmatic approach to combat, "You just had to get on with it. That's your duty, you've got to do it and you became accustomed to it. It's 'work' effectively." Davies needed to hang on to this resilience as his biggest battle was still to come, "In March, they started to prepare us and towards the end of the month they took us in a big convoy one night. We didn't know where we were going, nobody told us our destination. We ended up at Cassino."

The murderous monastery

By March 1944, the Italian Campaign was not going well for the Allies. The Allied commanders struggled to co-ordinate their forces during the battles in the push north and their ground and air forces often could not work together effectively. To compound their misery, the formidable Gustav Line blocked their road to Rome. The line was a German defensive position constructed in late 1943 across Italy from Gaeta in the west, through Cassino, across the Apennine Mountains and onto the Sangro estuary on the eastern coast. It would take four Allied offensives to break through these positions, many of which were fortified hilltops, towns and villages. The optimal Allied

route to Rome was through the Liri Valley but Gustav defences blocked this route around the small town of Cassino, which was located near the confluences of the Rivers Gari (known as 'Rapido') and Liri. The line was particularly strong on the Monte Cassino heights, which was topped by its famous monastery. Founded by the Benedictine Order, the Medieval monastery was an Italian national monument and famous for its architecture, library and irreplaceable manuscripts.

Nevertheless, such historical treasures were of little importance to the Allied commanders who were facing stiff German resistance. Before March 1944, there had already been two battles at Monte Cassino, the first, which occurred between 17 January and 11 February, saw British, American and French troops make a series of attacks on the Gustav Line defences around the town of Cassino, but these only made limited gains.

The second battle, between 15-18 February, saw Indian and New Zealand troops from Eighth Army assist beleaguered Allied forces that had landed to the north at Anzio. It was during this battle that General Alexander controversially ordered the monastery to be bombed; he wrongly thought the Germans were using it as an observation post. Astonishingly, it was a whole day before the initial air strike was followed by ground attacks and high casualties were incurred. The German defenders built even stronger fortifications in the rubble left by the bombing and these new defences proved too much for the Allies to break.

In the front line

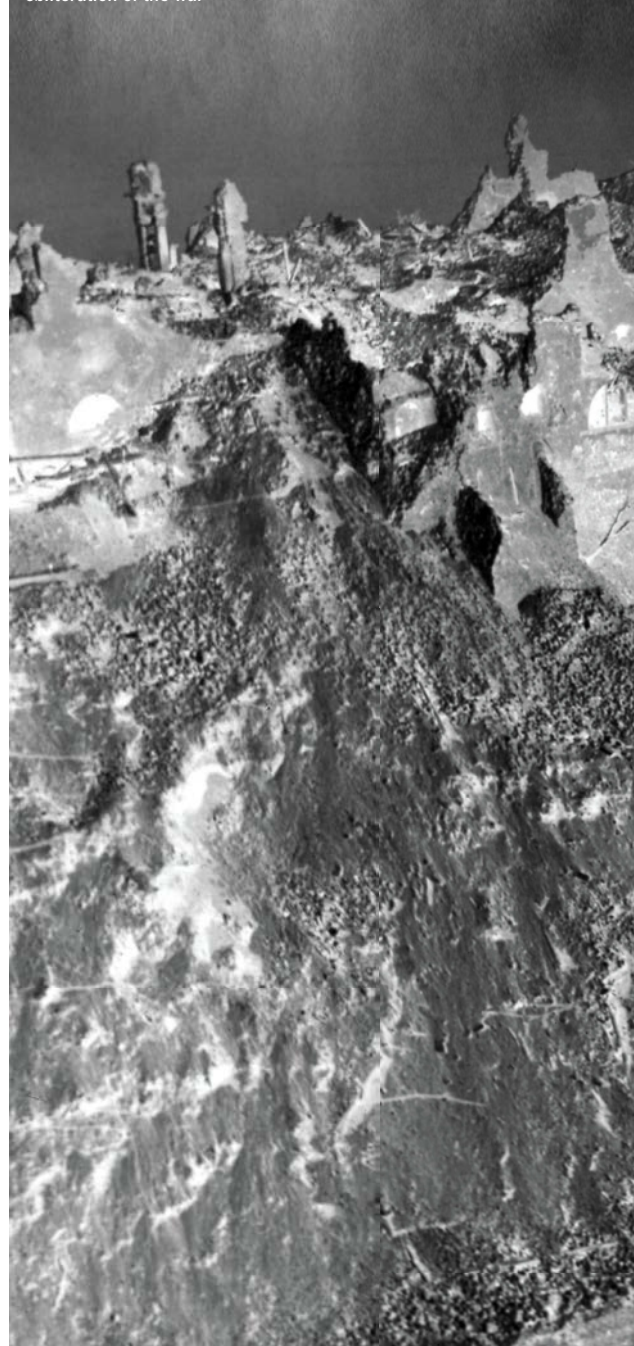
Davies was driven forward to Monte Cassino during the third battle, which took place in March, but ended up staying in the battle zone for six weeks. It was an immediate baptism of fire for the young Welshman and from unexpected quarters, "We were initially held in reserve. They pulled everybody back because they started the bombing the place, but they bombed us as well. Our unit wasn't hit particularly hard but a lot of other units had bombs dropped on them. American planes mostly did this, but there were British planes in there too."

After being given marching orders Davies's regiment began to head towards the battle area, "We had to walk across a big valley that was a few miles away to get to Cassino. We marched up and you've got to go in the dark because the Germans had all the co-ordinates and they could shell and bomb you." Davies's objective was a smaller promontory below Monte Cassino called Castle Hill, which was named after the remains of a Medieval fort that was located on top. It had recently been taken by the Essex Regiment when Davies arrived, "We relieved the Essexes. We had to climb up this hill and take as much ammunition as we could. We had porters to carry it up for us to get up there. It took about two hours to get up this rocky hill and

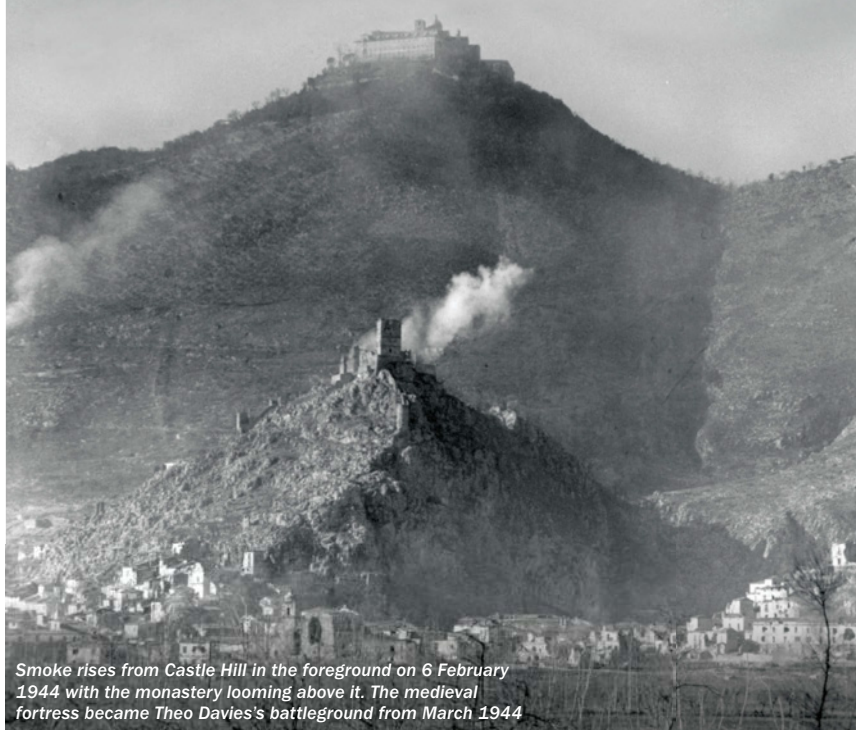


Above: British soldiers with a Bofors 40mm anti-aircraft gun below Monte Cassino in April 1944

An aerial view of the Abbey of Monte Cassino after a bombing. The destruction of the unique medieval monastery is the most famous Allied cultural obliteration of the war



"A WHITE LINE WAS PUT DOWN ALL THE WAY TO SHOW US THE PATH WHERE THERE WEREN'T ANY MINES. IF YOU STEPPED OFF AWAY FROM THAT LINE, YOU RISKED BEING BLOWN UP"



Smoke rises from Castle Hill in the foreground on 6 February 1944 with the monastery looming above it. The medieval fortress became Theo Davies's battleground from March 1944

OPERATION DIADEM

AN INTERNATIONAL BATTLE

Monte Cassino is famous for the different Allied nations that came together to fight at the battle. The units below represent the multinational units that finally broke the deadlock, but in earlier battles there were also troops from Australia and Brazil



UNITED KINGDOM

4th Infantry Division, 6th Armoured Division, 8th Infantry Division, 78th Infantry Division, 25th Army Tank Brigade, 24th Guards Brigade, 2nd Parachute Brigade, 23rd Armoured Brigade



UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

88th Infantry Division, 85th Infantry Division, 1st Armoured Group, 3rd Infantry Division, 36th Infantry Division, IV Corps HQ



FREE FRANCE

1st Motorised Infantry Division, Marine Artillery Corps, 7th and 8th Régiments Chasseurs d'Afrique, Levant Artillery Regiment, 3rd Algerian Division, 64th African Artillery Regiment



MOROCCO

4th Mountain Division, 2nd Infantry Division, Three Tabor Groups of Goumiers



SOUTH AFRICA

12th Motorised Brigade, 6th Armoured Division



INDIA

4th Infantry Division, 10th Infantry Division



CANADA

1st Armoured Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, 5th Armoured Division



NEW ZEALAND

2nd Division



ITALY

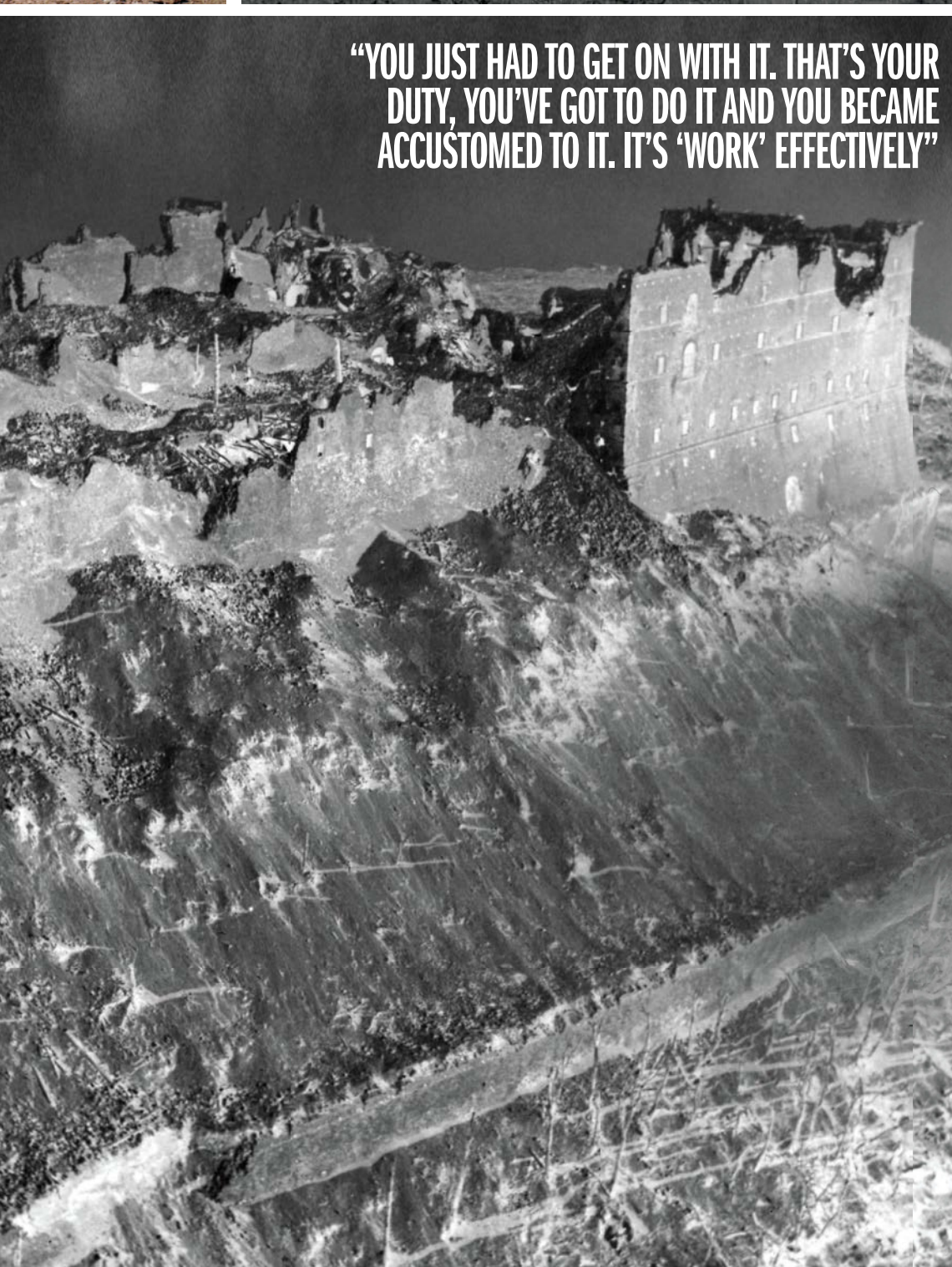
Italian Corps of Liberation



POLAND

3rd Carpathian Rifle Brigade, 5th Kresowa Infantry Division, 2nd Armoured Brigade

“YOU JUST HAD TO GET ON WITH IT. THAT’S YOUR DUTY, YOU’VE GOT TO DO IT AND YOU BECAME ACCUSTOMED TO IT. IT’S ‘WORK’ EFFECTIVELY”



Above: Polish soldiers fighting at Monte Cassino. The Poles' contribution to the final victory became instantly famous

of course, we were under the observation of the Germans, so we had to keep in the dark and in the shadows. A white line was put down all the way to show us the path where there weren't any mines. If you stepped off away from that line, you risked being blown up."

The Royal West Kents were now in the front line and their next task would be a rescue mission, "During the battle, the castle only had one bit of wall standing. Two walls were down and one part was standing at the back. Once we were inside, we were shown our positions but we were told we were going in to attack that night. We were going because as far as we knew, there were 11 or 12 Ghurkha soldiers cut off up on Hangman's Hill and we were going up to try and get them out."

Davies and his comrades would have to perform this mission under complete darkness,

"We went down the rocks and got to a road. We couldn't see anything; it was pitch black. Once we got on the road, there were explosions going off left, right and centre. We were in the middle of a minefield. The road was heavily mined so eventually, the attack was called off. We couldn't get all of our wounded out, so we had to get back up into the castle, which was a climb up. We were told to retreat up there."

Davies himself became a casualty of this attack, "I was wounded myself. It wasn't anything specific but I had cuts everywhere on my face. What you've got to remember is there was so much rock at Cassino that it wasn't so much the shrapnel we were receiving from the shells, it was what they were sending up from the stone rock. In the end, I didn't have a bit of shrapnel in me, but I was cut to bits by pieces of rock."

"WE WERE GOING IN TO ATTACK BECAUSE AS FAR AS WE KNEW THERE WERE 11 OR 12 GHURKHA SOLDIERS CUT OFF UP ON HANGMAN'S HILL AND WE WERE GOING UP TO TRY AND GET THEM OUT"



Right: Allied soldiers make their way through the battlefield ruins

As well as his own injuries, Davies's friend, a fellow Welshman who had been transferred to the West Kents called Cliff Lloyd, was also wounded, "We got back into the castle and then of course we had to watch then for a counterattack. The wounded were evacuated the next morning and we went down under the flag of the Red Cross and all the firing stopped. I was parted from my friend, Cliff, who was sent to Naples because he was critically wounded." In a reflection of how desperate the battle

CHURCHILL'S BUTCHERS

DAVIES'S REGIMENT WAS PART OF THE BRITISH 78TH INFANTRY DIVISION, A DISTINGUISHED FORCE THAT FOUGHT ALL THE WAY FROM NORTH AFRICA TO AUSTRIA

Davies fought in the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment during WWII as part of 78th Division. He recalls of his time in the division, "We used to be called 'Churchill's Butchers'. That was name 'Lord Haw-Haw' used to give us because that was part of his propaganda (real name William Joyce, Lord Haw-Haw was a British fascist and Nazi broadcaster). He'd say things like, 'How are Churchill's butchers today?' and things like that. The 78th Division had quite a good record in Italy."

The reason Davies's division had come to the attention of Nazi propagandists was because its infantry were highly effective. 78th Division was formed in Scotland on 35 May 1942, and within four months of its establishment, it took part in Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of north-west

Africa. The landings were highly successful and set the pattern for similar landings in Sicily, Italy and ultimately Normandy. 78th's part in Torch's success was made possible because many of its constituent units trained together and were brought under a single command. The division specialised in amphibious assaults and therefore was particularly well prepared for the operation, although in the event, the landings at Algiers were unopposed between 8-9 November 1942.

The division's first significant opposition was at Tebourba in December 1942. From then on, it saw hard fighting on the Algerian-Tunisian border in the winter of 1942-43, but the Tunisian campaign was successful. After landing in Sicily on 25-26 July 1943, the division fought in the island campaign and then landed in Italy on 22

Right: The cap badge of the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment would later find fame as the platoon badge in Dad's Army



September. From this point, Davies became a member of the division and it fought with Eighth Army through Italy, including at Monte Cassino. The division was known as 'Churchill's Butchers' by some because of the destruction they inflicted on German troops. After a brief withdrawal to Egypt to re-equip and rest, 78th Division fought in the Apennines and then in the final advance through the Argenta Gap into northern Italy and Austria. The division ended its war as part of the occupation forces in Austria and was disbanded in August 1946.

Davies's specific unit, the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment did not serve with 78th Division for all of the latter's existence. Initially formed in 1881, the regiment was the result of British Army reforms that gave Kent two county regiments, one of which was the Queen's Own. When war broke out, the 1st Battalion was deployed straight to France in September 1939, but was evacuated from Dunkirk in June 1940.

The 2nd Battalion was sent to Malta and garrisoned the island throughout the siege but both battalions went on to serve in North Africa in 1943. The 2nd Battalion was captured on the Greek island of Leros but the 1st spent 1944 fighting up Italy. After the war, the regiment saw active service during the Malayan Emergency between 1951-54, the Suez Crisis of 1956 and against EOKA guerrillas in Cyprus from 1957-58. In 1961, it was amalgamated with the Buffs (Royal East Kent Regiment) to form the Queen's Own Buffs, Royal Kent Regiment.

The regimental cap badge later became famous as the one used by the Home Guard platoon in the BBC comedy series *Dad's Army*, although as Davies jokingly remarks, "Our cap badge was the same, but we were the younger version and better commanded."



Infantrymen of the 78th division hurl grenades at a German strong point in Italy, March 1945

was, Davies's wounds were not considered as serious as his friend's, "I was patched up and was back once all the cuts had healed up after about ten days."

The Royal West Kents had not moved in the ten days that Davies had been away, and were still on Castle Hill, "The day after I had left with the wounded, there was a German counterattack, but all our boys were waiting in a square for them and they were repulsed. They never counterattacked us again all the time we were there, which was about six weeks. We'd be there off-and-on for about four to eight days depending on the conditions and how good the relieving troops were. We were there until about the end of April."

Life for Davies now consisted of rotating between shifts on the hill and conditions were difficult, "It was so bad on Castle Hill that you couldn't move in daylight. You were looking at that monastery all the time but you couldn't see any movement in it and our sight was obscured by a back wall. Our officers did the observing and they were the only ones who could see what was happening on the hill." For protection, the British would construct temporary fortifications called 'sangars' out of stones but their use at Monte Cassino bordered on trench warfare, "Sangars is the name we gave to our slit trenches, but we couldn't really dig them because it was all rock. We would build up a kind of shelter instead and we'd put up any old props that we could on the top that would give us protection."

Although he was trained as an infantryman, Davies did not have much opportunity to get to grips in close-quarter fighting, "On a day-to-day basis, you had to be there to observe all the time and Jerry would be mortaring you constantly. You had to make sure that if he came, you were ready to repulse him. We didn't do so much actual fighting because there was nothing to shoot at, but the mortars were going all the time."

The German bombardment was so intense that relief from the mortaring was measured in minutes, "It was always a relief to see the spotter plane on a fine day coming up to locate German artillery positions because it stopped all the enemy mortars and guns firing on us. If they kept firing, the artillery officer and the spotter plane would see them, so it was a relief to see the aircraft coming up as it gave us a quiet period of about 20 minutes. It was a little old biplane that used to fly high overhead, but it was a good relief."

Davies managed to escape the German mortars and even survived an encounter with

"IT WAS ALWAYS A RELIEF TO SEE THE SPOTTER PLANE ON A FINE DAY COMING UP TO LOCATE GERMAN ARTILLERY POSITIONS BECAUSE IT STOPPED ALL THE ENEMY MORTARS AND GUNS FIRING ON US"

A CONTROVERSIAL CAMPAIGN

MONTE CASSINO WAS A HOLLOW VICTORY THANKS TO BAD ALLIED RELATIONS AND WAS OVERSHADOWED BY EVENTS ABROAD

When the North African campaign turned decisively in the Allies' favour in 1942, it was a significant boost to morale and plans were immediately made to invade Italy and thereby neutralise Nazi Germany's junior fascist partner. However, the Allies were split between prioritising the planned invasion of Europe in the west or grinding down Axis resistance in Italy to make the larger invasion easier. The latter idea prevailed, but the Italian campaign literally became a bloody uphill struggle, with Monte Cassino being the clearest example. In the aftermath of the battle there was a chance to thrust into the German line of retreat. In a costly example of tense Allied relations, the British General Alexander ordered the US Fifth Army under General Mark Clark to cut off the German retreat from the Cassino area. However, Clark disobeyed his superior and decided to enter Rome instead.

American forces triumphantly entered the capital on 5 June 1944, but by doing this Clark had also let the threatened German forces escape. His decision has been described by one historian, "...as militarily stupid as it was insubordinate." Not only did D-Day overshadow the liberation only 24 hours later, but the Germans also managed to withdraw to tough defences at the Gothic Line. This further impeded Allied progress and further bloodshed

ensued. Davies, who was still fighting, has reflected on Clark's decision, "If he'd turned and cut the Germans off, he would have bagged a few divisions of them. It wouldn't have ended the war but it would have put a lot more pressure on the Germans and they would have had to bring in more replacements. At the time, the thinking was that everybody thought it was a big mistake."

Although the campaign has been overshadowed by the titanic struggles on the Western and Eastern Fronts, Davies believes the hard-fought gains in Italy were justified, "The contribution that the Italian campaign made to the war was fantastic because it kept those German armies occupied. The Americans weren't in favour of going to Italy but I think it was one of the wisest moves. When they got up places like Foggia, there were many American and British bombers and they were supplying partisans in Yugoslavia and Greece from Italy. They were also doing terrific damage doing bombing raids into the Balkans. We were draining the Germans bit by bit, if we hadn't been in Italy there would have probably been another 20 divisions on the Russian front and the war might not have finished as quickly as it did. There would have been extra troops at D-Day as well." Nonetheless, despite his shrewd analysis, Davies remains modest in hindsight, "We can all form our opinions better after the event. When I was actually in the line, I was ignorant and was thinking more about survival."



US General Mark Clark (left) rides through Rome on 5 June 1944. His decision to liberate the ancient capital disobeyed superior orders and allowed German forces to escape

shrapnel that was not just dangerous, but also potentially embarrassing, "There were two other fellows in the sangars and myself. In the daytime, you would rotate duty, one-on and one-off, and I was having one of these men to come out and relieve me. I was bending down to go into this sangar and there was a massive explosion behind me and felt a terrific bang in my backside. I let out a yelp and thought I'd been hit. I had actually been struck by a big bit of shrapnel, but thankfully it hadn't cut me at all. It didn't even go through my trousers. I think this happened mainly because I had been bent down to get into the slit trench."

Friends and enemies

Although Monte Cassino has since become known for the multinational makeup of the Allied armies, Davies stresses that day-to-day he wasn't always in contact with other international units, "You must remember that there were hundreds of thousands of troops there, across all those divisions. I was in the 78th 'Battleaxe' Division and each division was made up of about 10,000 men, so you can imagine the large numbers of the other divisions too."

Nonetheless, Davies did appreciate the fighting abilities of other Allied units, if not always their individual methods. "You could admire them all because you knew very well what they were doing. I very much admired the

"THE TERRAIN OF ITALY MAKES IT AN EASY PLACE TO DEFEND: EVERY PLACE YOU GO IS A HILL. IT WAS A MARVELLOUS PLACE FOR THE GERMANS AND WE FOUGHT THEM TOOTH AND NAIL ALL THE WAY UP IT"

Indian divisions, while the French colonial troops were more tribal and used to have horses with them and even their wives sometimes. The Americans were good fighters but the only thing was that they were a bit undisciplined. When it came to being relieved, they'd leave a couple of troops as guards and they'd be gone in no time, whereas we'd stay and follow our opposition until someone else came to take over."

Interestingly, despite the fact that Italy had been a fascist ally of the Germans, Davies and other British troops were not coldly received by the local population, "The Italian people were very good; in fact they were very nice to us. I found that if you treat people right they would do the same to you. They were kind."

As for the Germans, Davies is unequivocal about their ability to fight, "The Germans we encountered at Monte Cassino were all paratroopers. They were strong fighters without a doubt. Not only that, but they were seasoned fighters who had been brought from the Russian front. In a similar way to our units, I expect they'd been reinforced as well because

they were losing men the same as us. They kept on ramming reinforcements." Davies and his comrades felt the brunt of Kesselring's strategy to fight the Allies all the way up through Italy, "It was easier for them because they kept going back to prepared positions. They knew what they were doing the moment they were withdrawn from Salerno, they were preparing their positions all the way back and still prepared them after it. The Germans knew exactly where we were going. They were ruthless people and would force the Italians into preparing their positions for them."

The topography was also in the Germans' favour, "The terrain of Italy makes it an easy place to defend: every place you go is a hill. It was a marvellous place for the Germans and we fought them tooth and nail all the way up it. They were sat there waiting for us. It was very difficult for us because we had to get them off every hill. We saw all these beautiful villages in Italy on the top of hills but they all had to be cleared. Many an infantryman has said since, 'I know Italy, I've walked it all.'"



The fog of war. Much of the Battle of the Monte Cassino was a confused mess of smoke and destruction



Left:
A British soldier armed with a Bren gun in the ruins of Monte Cassino, May 1944

of Eighth Army would capture Monte Cassino, the US Fifth Army would attack near the western coast and the troops at Anzio would cut communications between the Gustav Line and Rome.

This offensive was codenamed 'Operation Diadem' and was to be launched in late-spring 1944. Davies's training for Diadem began in late April, "They pulled us out of the line and we went to train with Canadian tanks. They then brought us back up again because the weather was improving. The rain was still coming and it was very wet and boggy but it was getting a bit warmer, although the Rapido River was still flooding. When we came back to Cassino, we were out towards the Liri Valley, we weren't in the town anymore. We were ready to go in with the Canadians when they broke through with the tanks."

Diadem was launched on the night of 10-11 May, and French troops of the Fifth Army finally unlocked the Gustav Line, breaking through some 20 kilometres south of Cassino. The Royal West Kents' task was to advance up the Liri Valley near Cassino with Canadian tanks, as Davies recalls, "We were going in behind the Canadians, mopping up and breaking through the resistance. It was normal infantry training and fighting. The resistance we encountered was the usual thing of machine guns and infantry fire. You just had to keep on going.

Sometimes they strafed you and you had to keep your head down but then you'd fire and drive them back. The only way you knew you'd been successful was when you were passing dead Germans."

This time the offensive was successful, and the monastery was finally captured by Polish

Below: Men of Theo Davies's regiment the Queen's Own Royal West Kents in a dugout at Monte Cassino, 26 March 1944

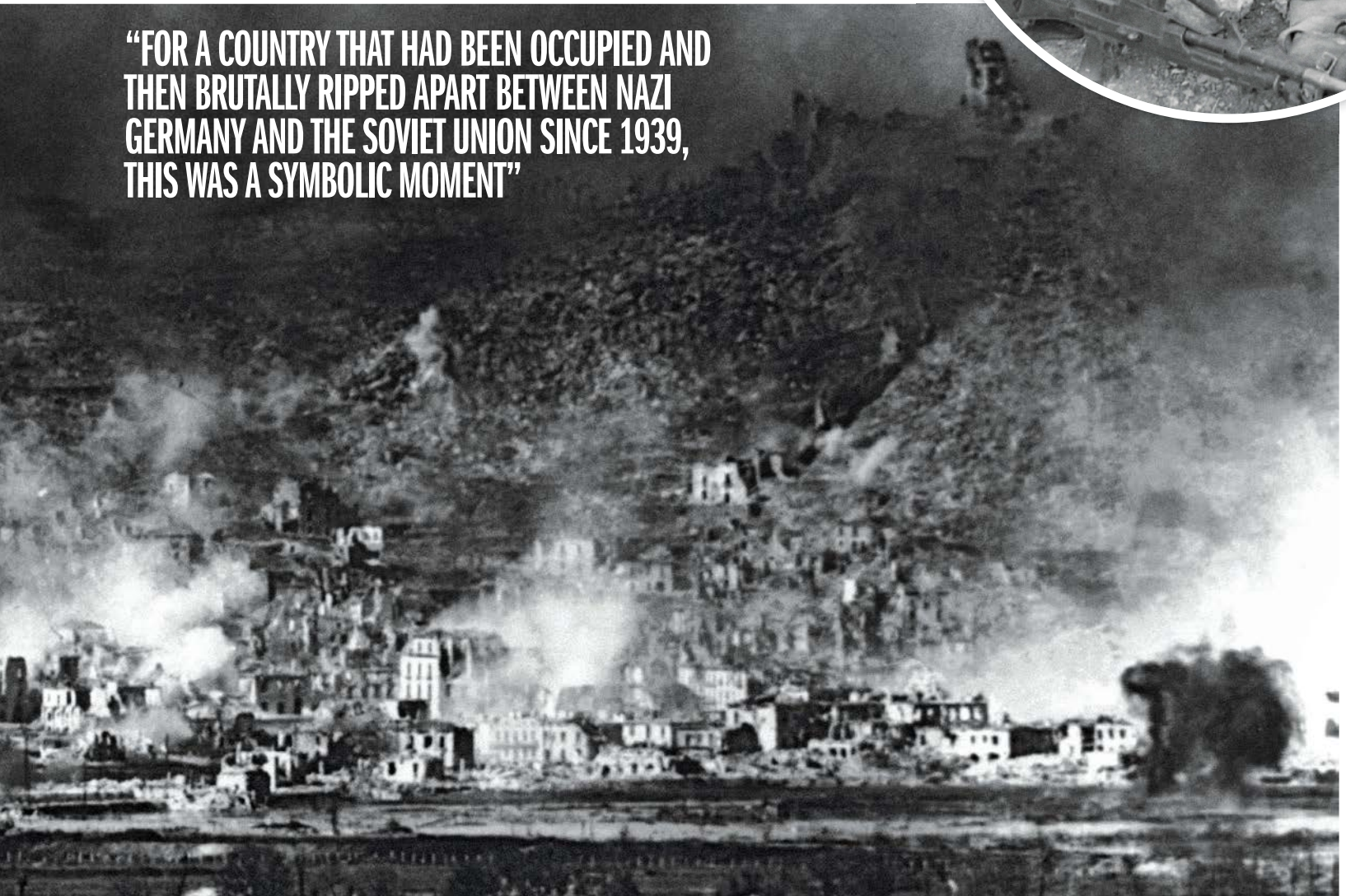


Operation Diadem

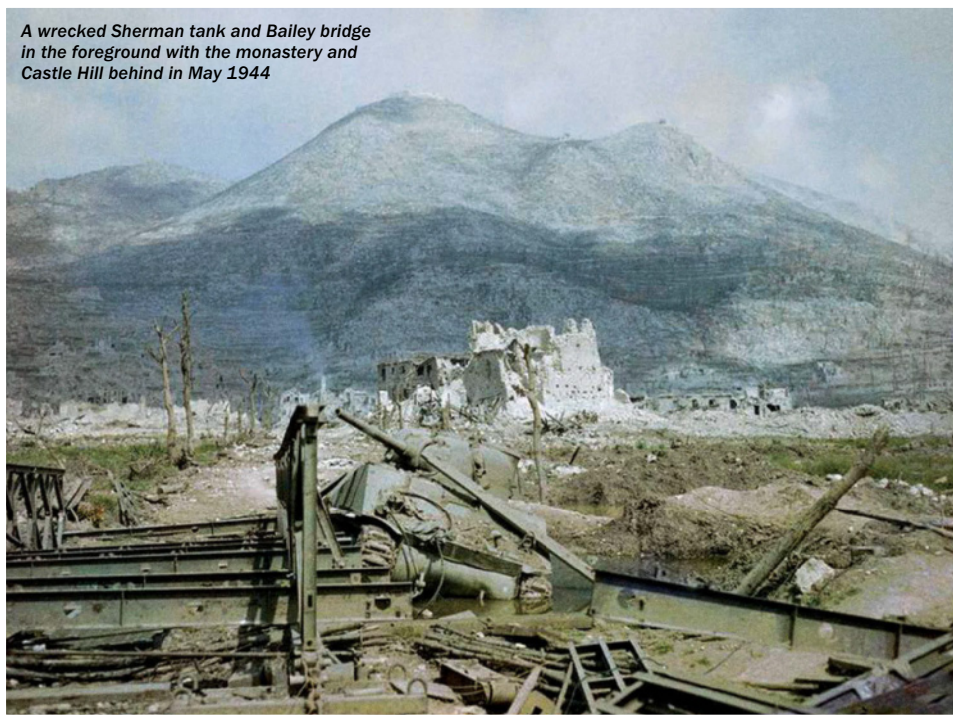
By May 1944, the Allies had suffered a successive string of failures at Monte Cassino. The previous three battles had failed to break the deadlock and tens of thousands of men were dead, with thousands more being wounded. They were fighting in conditions that were eerily similar to the Western Front in WWI, with trenches, wet conditions, stalemate and constant artillery bombardments.

The Allied leaders now came together and drew up a new plan. For the first time during the campaign, they used their full resources and not just part of their various armies. The bulk

"FOR A COUNTRY THAT HAD BEEN OCCUPIED AND THEN BRUTALLY RIPPED APART BETWEEN NAZI GERMANY AND THE SOVIET UNION SINCE 1939, THIS WAS A SYMBOLIC MOMENT"



A wrecked Sherman tank and Bailey bridge in the foreground with the monastery and Castle Hill behind in May 1944



Master Corporal Emil Czech of the Polish II Corps plays the bugle in the ruins of the monastery on 18 May 1944 announcing victory

troops of II Corps on 18 May, who raised the flag of Poland among its ruins. For a country that had been occupied and then brutally ripped apart between Nazi Germany and the USSR since 1939, this was a symbolic moment.

The Poles had also managed to link up with Davies's 78th Division in the Liri Valley. Their contribution to the Allied victory at Monte Cassino became instantly famous, but in purely military terms, Davies believes there were other important factors in the final Allied victory, "In my opinion, it wasn't the breakthrough with the Poles running on the monastery. Instead, it was a breakthrough by French Moroccan Goumiers and the American Fifth Army on the other side of the valley. They went up where they didn't think they could go. However, they started taking positions and the Germans were then afraid of being cut off. I think that influenced their decision to pull out and that's why it was easier for the Poles to go from Hill 593 and across. Why the commanders didn't think of going round to that valley before instead of taking the bastion I don't know, but then again, I'm only a Tommy soldier."

A wrongly forgotten legacy

After the fall of Monte Cassino, the Germans began retreating to the Caesar Line between Rome and Anzio and the Allies began their advance on the capital city.

This coincided with a breakout from the Anzio beachhead and two days later this advance linked up with the main body of Fifth Army. The push north could continue, but for ordinary soldiers like Davies a rest was in order, "We went up the Liri Valley for a while and got up as far as Frosinone along with the Canadians and then we were pulled out. We were given a rest and we didn't go back into the action until the liberation of Rome. The Americans went in but we weren't given the honour."

Once Davies returned to the front, the bloodshed continued beyond the Italian capital, "I carried on past Rome and I was wounded

again on 19 June at Lake Trasimeno. That was the third time I was wounded and because of it, I was out for a long time in hospital. I rejoined my division but then left them in January 1945 up near Bologna because I went down with shell shock. Altogether, I was wounded three times in Italy but only once at Monte Cassino." Unfortunately for Davies and other soldiers fighting in the Italian Campaign, this was an all too common occurrence.

Monte Cassino was one of the worst operations of the entire campaign. In the four battles it took to take the monastery, the Allies had suffered about 55,000 casualties, while the Germans had lighter losses of about 35,000. The suffering had also been severe at the Anzio Landings, which happened at the same time, meaning the total Allied casualty rate between the two operations ended up reaching approximately 105,000.

To make matters worse, the final capture of Monte Cassino occurred only a few weeks before the D-Day Landings in Normandy on 6 June, and men who were serving in Italy were given the unfair nickname of 'D-Day Dodgers'. Davies explains, "After the battle we used to get so little write up in the press back home about Italy that there was a song written called *D-Day Dodgers*. It was supposed to have come

about because Lady Astor said something in the House of Commons about the men serving in Italy were nothing but 'D-Day Dodgers' because we 'didn't want to go' to D-Day. But we were out there because we were sent there. I don't think the story is true and I suspect it was probably sent out by German propaganda, but of course the morale of the boys out there was so low they were bound to believe it."

Monte Cassino is relatively forgotten compared to D-Day, but Davies has no doubt of its importance, "It's a battle that has been forgotten without doubt. My personal thoughts about Monte Cassino are that it was a terrible place. There was constant bombardment, you couldn't move and we were under observation all the time. The casualties were high. We were sitting ducks, but we had to hang on to every foothold that we had, it was essential that we hung on. It was definitely the worst battle in the Mediterranean in my opinion."

Davies's final thoughts perhaps speak for many Allied soldiers of the Italian Campaign who fought to take the monastery and open the road to Rome, "When you look at it, I was 19 and wounded three times before I was 20. However, every other battle that I was in I thought I'd survive, but I never thought I'd survive Monte Cassino."

THE MONTE CASSINO SOCIETY

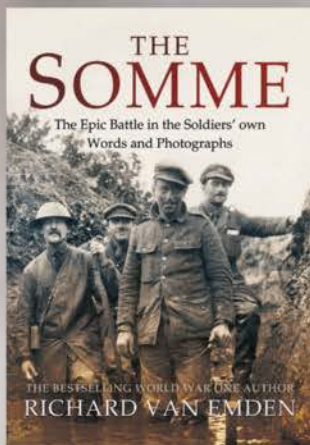
The Monte Cassino Society is dedicated to furthering interest in the experiences of those from all Allied nations who participated in the Italian Campaign of WWII. Three daughters of Monte Cassino veterans founded the society and its aims are to collect, document and preserve information about veterans' experiences so that they are remembered by future generations. Veterans and relatives are welcome to contribute accounts, memoirs or recollections. Newsletters detailing events and news for members are released quarterly.

For more information visit www.montecassinossociety.co.uk/index.php and to contact the society, all enquiries can be sent to info@montecassinossociety.co.uk

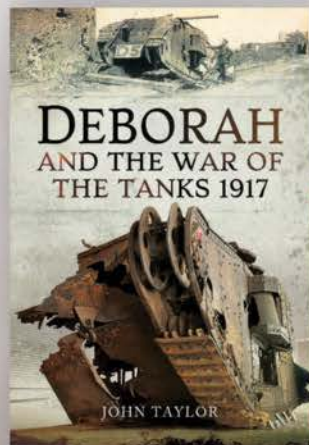


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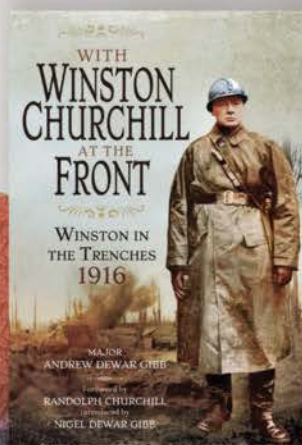
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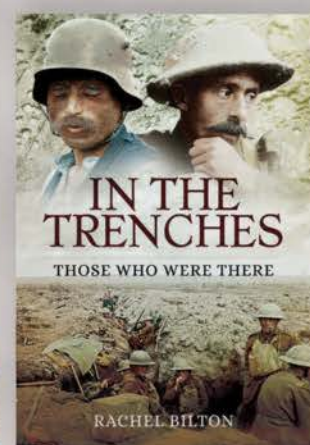
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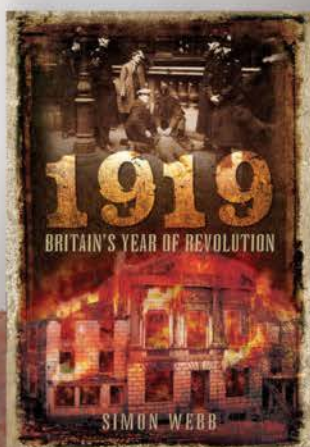
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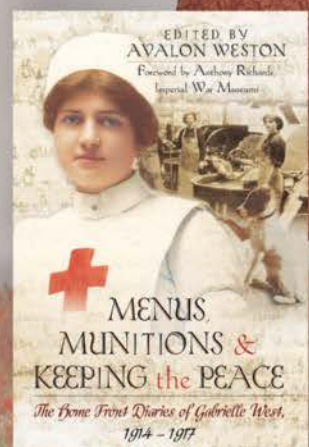
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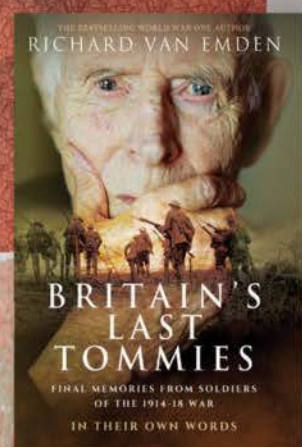
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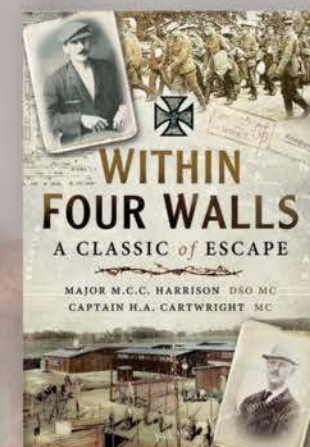
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From George Washington to George Bush, military experience has always been an important factor in deciding who governs from the White House as commander-in-chief of the United States

The office of President of the United States of America is the most powerful and influential in the world. Democratically elected from potentially 219 million voters, the president's executive role in federal government means that he or she presides over the largest global economy and, perhaps most crucially, is commander-in-chief of the USA's armed forces. The title is no formality and is enshrined in article II, section 2 of the US Constitution that states, "The President shall be commander in chief of the army and navy of the United States, and of the militia of the several states, when called into the actual service of the United States."

When the Constitution was created and ratified between 1787-88, the army, navy and marines were the only military organisations that the president was responsible for but since that time the role has greatly expanded and now includes not just the United States Air Force but also intelligence services and one of the largest arsenals of nuclear weapons in the world. The latter in particular makes the role of president possibly the most responsible job known to mankind and in colloquial terms, the person who has the power to 'push the red button' is theoretically able to cause Armageddon in a single stroke.

With such an emphasis on hard power, it is no coincidence that the role of president is strongly associated with the armed forces and it is reflected in the choice of men (so far) that have been elected to high office. As of October 2016, out of 44 presidents only 11 have not seen service in the US military or state militias. Significant non-military presidents include

Barack Obama, Bill Clinton and the founding father John Adams.

Remarkably, presidents Woodrow Wilson and Franklin D Roosevelt hold the ironic honour of successfully leading the USA through the world wars despite having no military experience. Nonetheless, the role of previous military service is crucial to the presidential story and is interwoven with conflicts throughout American history. Presidents have served as soldiers in the forefront of every significant war up until 1945, and their successful fighting careers often had a direct bearing on their future electoral victories from the American War of Independence through the Civil War and finally WWII.

In an interesting coincidence there have been no presidents who served in America's most high-profile defeat: the Vietnam War. This anomaly includes distinguished but unsuccessful presidential candidates like John Kerry and John McCain. Success on the battlefield in victorious wars for the USA has been equated to potential presidential achievement and, rightly or wrongly, commanders-in-chief have often been elected on the back of their wartime heroics, regardless of their political and administrative experience or ability.

The stories involved with each military president varies enormously, from saving lives, leading men to victory on the battlefield, winning medals for distinguished service and even commanding whole armies from different nations in complicated coalitions. In many ways, the United States has been forged by war and its presidents have been a critical factor in this part of history both during their terms of office and, most intriguingly, before.



"THE PRESIDENT SHALL BE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMY AND NAVY OF THE UNITED STATES, AND OF THE MILITIA OF THE SEVERAL STATES, WHEN CALLED INTO THE ACTUAL SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES"

George Washington crossing the Delaware. This iconic painting of the Continental Army's most famous manoeuvre has become an integral part of the American story

GEORGE WASHINGTON

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1752-83 PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1789-97

Perhaps the most famous, and important, soldier-president was the very first. George Washington's role as commander-in-chief of the rebellious Continental Army during the American War of Independence was decisive in ensuring the colonists' victory against their British masters, and ultimately led to the creation of the United States. Conversely, his actual military career was a curious mix of wavering fortunes and lack of battlefield prowess, combined with a great sense of strategy and a talent for successfully organising a fledgling army.

Washington's military career began in 1752 when, aged only 20, he was made a major in the Virginia militia and gained a reputation for efficiency and courage. By 1754, he was a lieutenant colonel and fought for four years during the French and Indian War for the British, commanding the Virginia Regiment. Although he was known for his courage, Washington was defeated and captured by the French at the Battle of Fort Mifflin, and played a controversial role in the British defeat at the Battle of the Monongahela. Despite these setbacks, Washington learned much about British command principles and their operational techniques in America. However, he resented British officers' arrogance towards colonial leaders and refused a commission in the regular British army.

By 1775, Washington was a member of Congress and on 14 June, he was appointed as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army. His task in the upcoming war against the British would be difficult. Although he was experienced by colonial standards, Washington had only commanded about 2,000 militiamen at most. This was tiny compared to conventional European armies, but he knew British

weaknesses fighting in North America and was an imposing commander. His first fighting forays into the war were, nonetheless, almost disastrous.

During the 1776 New York campaign, Washington suffered multiple defeats at Long Island, White Plains and Fort Mifflin. By the end of the year, his army had been chased from New York into New Jersey and Pennsylvania. However, at his lowest ebb, Washington seized the initiative by moving his army and artillery across the Delaware River on 30 December and then defeated the British twice at Trenton and Princeton. These victories boosted colonial morale and impressed the French to enter the war.

Washington's real military achievements were arguably off the battlefield. In an age when disease killed far more than battle-related injuries, Washington boldly inoculated his army against smallpox in 1777, which reduced his army's deaths from the disease from 17 per cent to one per cent. This was unprecedented in war and it greatly enabled him to maintain numerical strength, but Washington also managed his army despite crippling supply problems by astute delegation. By 1781, he could not properly pay his troops, writing: "We are at the end of our tether," but he had held his army together long enough for French troops to arrive and tip the balance.

At the Siege of Yorktown, a Franco-American army under Washington decisively defeated the British and forced General Cornwallis to surrender along with more than 7,000 of his troops. Yorktown forced the British to negotiate and in 1783, the United States of America became a reality. Six years later, Washington was unanimously elected as the country's first president and commander-in-chief.

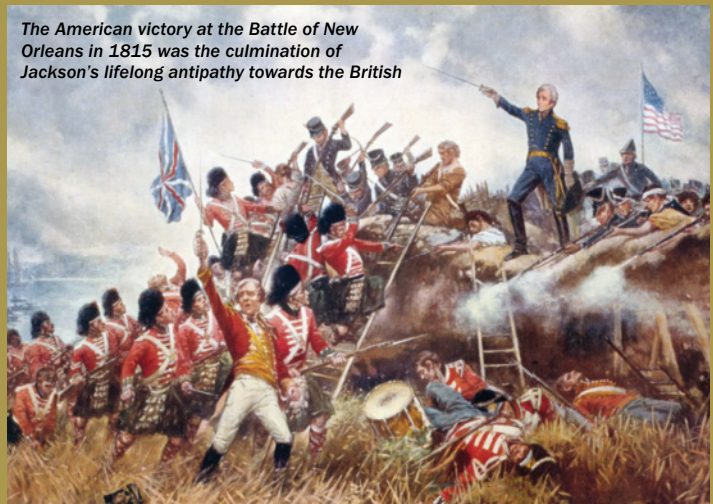
ANDREW JACKSON

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1812-19
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1829-1837

Andrew Jackson is the only president to have fought in both the War of Independence and the War of 1812. When he was 13 years old, he joined a local militia as a courier and was captured by the British in 1781, making him the only president to have been a prisoner-of-war. Jackson was left permanently scarred when a British officer slashed his left hand and face after he refused to polish his boots.

Despite a lack of real military experience, Jackson was appointed a major general during the War of 1812, winning the Battle of Horseshoe Bend in 1814 against Creek Native Americans. He was a popular commander and was known as 'Old Hickory' in reference to being as tough as the deep-rooted tree. His greatest victory came on 8 January 1815 when, despite being outnumbered almost two-to-one, he led 5,000 soldiers to an unexpected victory against the British at the Battle of New Orleans. This was the last major engagement of the war and Jackson became a national hero.

The American victory at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 was the culmination of Jackson's lifelong antipathy towards the British



Grant pictured as head of the Union Army at his camp at Cold Harbor, Virginia in 1864. President Lincoln described him as indispensable, "I cannot spare this man; he fights"

ULYSSES S GRANT

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1839-1854, 1861-1869

PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1869-77

From humble origins, Grant attended West Point in exchange for a free education and served as a lieutenant during the Mexican-American War (1846-48), a conflict he later viewed as morally dubious. He resigned as a captain in 1854 and subsequently struggled in civilian life. In 1860, he was forced to work in his brother's leather shop but his fortunes dramatically changed when civil war broke out. The north needed experienced officers and Grant rapidly went from being a captain to brigadier general.

In 1861, Grant led troops for the first time at the inconclusive Battle of Belmont, but learned much about Confederate tactics and forced Fort Donelson to surrender in February 1862, earning national praise and a promotion to major general. Although he was sharply criticised for high Union losses at the Battle of Shiloh in April 1862, Grant was kept on for his willingness to fight and his supreme calmness in combat. He was the first Union commander to go on the offensive and came into his own orchestrating the capture of Vicksburg, Mississippi. Grant cut his own supply lines and used enemy resources to feed his troops. After defeating two Confederate armies in five engagements, Vicksburg came under siege and six weeks later, the Southern garrison of more than 27,000 men surrendered on 4 July 1863. This was a crushing victory and President Lincoln declared, "Grant is my man and I am his."

By early 1864, Grant was the top general and Lincoln named him as commander of all Union forces. His relentless tactics led to high losses among northern troops and as a result, he earned the nickname 'The Butcher'. Nevertheless, the south was decimated and on 9 April 1865, General Robert E Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox House. This ended the war and Grant was a hero of the Union.



THEODORE ROOSEVELT

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1882-86, 1898

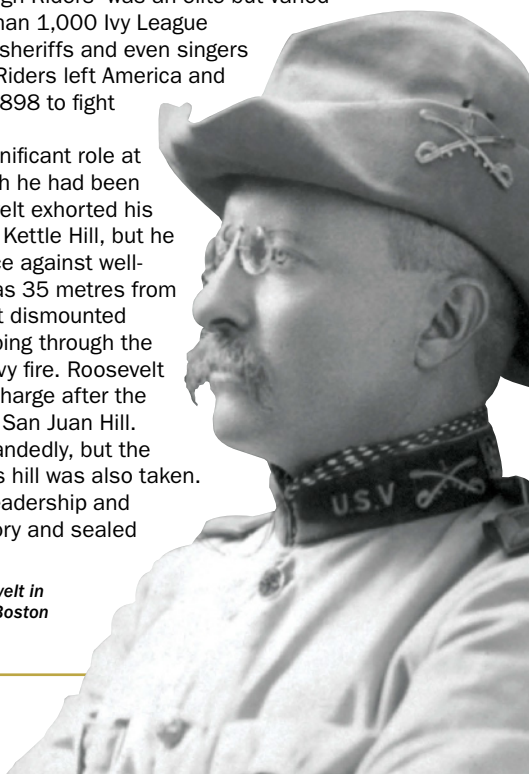
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1901-1909

Despite later winning the Nobel Peace Prize as president, Theodore Roosevelt's reputation is based on high adventure and military exploits. He was a keen advocate of exercise and in his spare time keen on outdoor pursuits including horse riding, boxing and wrestling. He was also a frontier sheriff who chased outlaws and hunted grizzly bears.

These vigorous activities made him ideally placed to become a soldier and he had been a lieutenant in the New York National Guard. However, in May 1898 he resigned his post of assistant secretary of the navy and volunteered for service as commander of the 1st US Volunteer Cavalry in order to take part in the Spanish-American War. This unit, better known to history as the 'Rough Riders' was an elite but varied company that comprised of more than 1,000 Ivy League gentlemen, cowboys, prospectors, sheriffs and even singers and Native Americans. The Rough Riders left America and disembarked in Cuba on 22 June 1898 to fight the Spanish.

On 1 July, Roosevelt played a significant role at the Battle of San Juan Hill. Although he had been hit by shrapnel in the wrist, Roosevelt exhorted his troops to support army regulars up Kettle Hill, but he ended up leading the entire advance against well-entrenched Spaniards. When he was 35 metres from the summit of Kettle Hill, Roosevelt dismounted and cut defensive wire before climbing through the fence and taking the hill under heavy fire. Roosevelt then ordered the Rough Riders to charge after the retreating Spanish up the adjacent San Juan Hill. He initially did this almost single-handedly, but the resulting full charge meant that this hill was also taken. It is now agreed that Roosevelt's leadership and courage greatly influenced the victory and sealed his reputation.

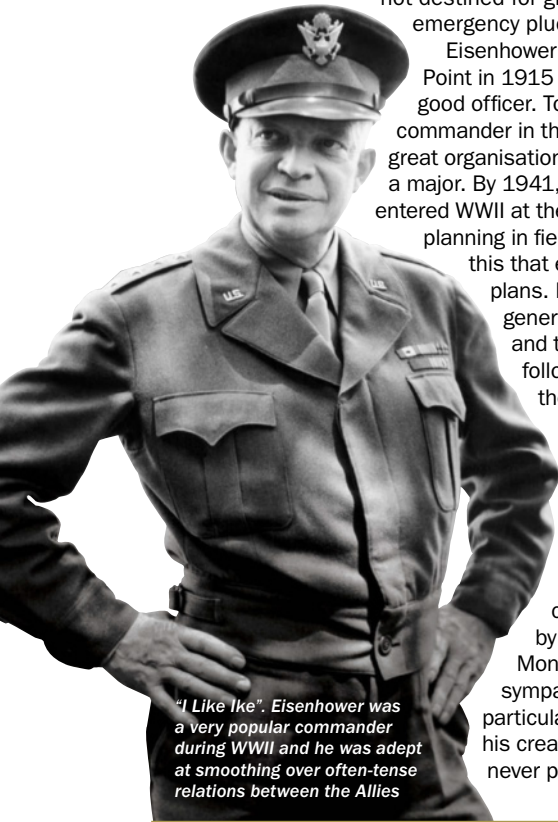
Right: Lieutenant Colonel Theodore Roosevelt in 1898. He had his own uniform tailored in Boston



DWIGHT D EISENHOWER

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1911-48, 1950-52 PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1953-61

The election of Dwight D Eisenhower to the presidency in 1953 is the most obvious case of a candidate greatly aided by a glittering military career. However, like Grant before him, 'Ike' was not destined for greatness, let alone the White House, until a severe emergency plucked him from obscurity.



"I Like Ike". Eisenhower was a very popular commander during WWII and he was adept at smoothing over often-tense relations between the Allies

Eisenhower was an average cadet when he graduated from West Point in 1915 and his teachers only considered him to be a potentially good officer. To his disappointment, he was stationed as a tank corps commander in the USA during WWI. Here he became known for having great organisational skills, but for much of the interwar years he was only a major. By 1941, he was just a colonel, but this changed when the USA entered WWII at the end of the year. Eisenhower had shown great strategic planning in field manoeuvres involving 400,000 troops and it was this that earned him rapid promotions to work on American war plans. By November 1942, he was promoted to lieutenant general, oversaw the Allied Operation Torch in North Africa, and then directed the invasions of Sicily and Italy the following year. His affable and diplomatic nature made him the ideal choice to command Operation Overlord, the official invasion of Europe, and in December 1943, he was appointed as supreme allied commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) and given enormous powers.

As well overseeing the liberation of Western Europe and the invasion of Germany, Eisenhower's task was to oversee intense co-operation between 11 Allied countries, particularly Britain, which was often hindered by fractious personalities like George Patton and Bernard Montgomery. It was largely thanks to Eisenhower's tact and sympathy that tensions were overcome and operations, in particular D-Day, were successful. Victory in Europe was largely his creation, so it is ironic that this most powerful of generals never personally saw combat.

JOHN F KENNEDY

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1941-45 PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1961-63

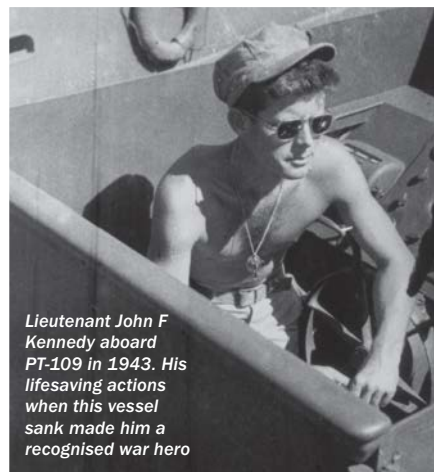
Kennedy came from a privileged family and when the USA entered WWII he attempted to join the US Navy, but was initially rejected because of his chronic back problems. His influential father managed to get him into the US Naval Reserves and by 1943, he was a lieutenant in charge of a small Patrol Torpedo (PT) boat with 11 crew based in the Solomon Islands. His first combat command was on PT-109. These boats were used to conduct night attacks on Japanese shipping, using high speeds to launch surprise torpedoes and strafe enemy craft with machine guns. Despite this, PT boats were vulnerable to attack and speedy escapes were their best defence.

On the night of 1-2 August 1943, PT-109 was running silent to avoid detection when it was struck by a Japanese destroyer. Travelling at 40 knots, the destroyer cut Kennedy's craft in half and two crew members were killed, while the rest were thrown in the water.

Kennedy ordered the PT-109 to be abandoned and gathered the survivors in the water by swimming out and pulling them onto the boat's wreckage. At dawn, Kennedy ordered his men to swim to the nearest island, which was about five kilometres away, and towed one of his wounded sailors with his bare teeth. He repeated this act on another swim to a bigger island and then did a further

swim to Nauru with another crew mate to get help. He sent a message carved on a coconut, with an islander, to the nearest American base and Kennedy and his crew were eventually rescued after eight days.

He was subsequently awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for lifesaving at sea, as well as a Purple Heart. Kennedy's wartime actions would later benefit his successful 1960 presidential campaign but he downplayed his becoming a hero by saying, "It was involuntary, they sank my boat."



Lieutenant John F Kennedy aboard PT-109 in 1943. His lifesaving actions when this vessel sank made him a recognised war hero

PRESIDENTS OF THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

SEVERAL COMMANDERS-IN-CHIEF SERVED DURING THE CIVIL WAR FOR THE UNION ALTHOUGH TWO WOULD LATER BE ASSASSINATED IN OFFICE



RUTHERFORD B HAYES

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1861-65
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1877-1881

Hayes served in the 23rd Ohio Infantry for the duration of the conflict. He led troops at the Battle of South Mountain in 1862, where his left arm was fractured by a bullet, and participated in the Valley Campaigns of 1864. During the war, Hayes was also wounded in the knee and shoulder. By 1865, he was a brevet major general and Ulysses S Grant said of Hayes, "His conduct was marked by conspicuous gallantry as well as the display of qualities of a higher order than that of mere personal daring."



JAMES A GARFIELD

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1861-63
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1881

Despite having no military training, Garfield was commissioned as a colonel in the 42nd Ohio Infantry Regiment in August 1861 and was then given the 18th Brigade to drive the Confederates out of eastern Kentucky. He commanded and won a small battle at Middle Creek in 1862 and later participated in the hard-fought Battle of Shiloh and the Siege of Corinth. Health problems restricted Garfield's active service and in 1863, he took a seat in the House of Representatives instead, but ended his war as a major general. Garfield was later assassinated as president after only 200 days in office.



BENJAMIN HARRISON

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1862-65
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1889-93

Like Garfield, Harrison had no military experience and joined the US Army in 1862 as a captain, but was quickly promoted to colonel of the 70th Indiana Infantry and spent two years on reconnaissance and guard duty. Circumstances changed in 1864 when Harrison's regiment was posted to the front line in the Atlanta campaign and he was promoted to command a brigade in XX Corps. He then took part in nine battles, including the Battle of Nashville in 1864, and by the end of the war Harrison was a brigadier general.



WILLIAM MCKINLEY

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1861-65
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1897-1901

Uniquely among the Civil War veteran presidents, McKinley volunteered as a private in June 1861 in the 23rd Ohio Infantry and met fellow future commander-in-chief, Rutherford B Hayes. McKinley rose through the ranks first as a quartermaster and then a commissary sergeant. Like Hayes, he fought at the battles of South Mountain and Antietam where his bravery earned him a commission to second lieutenant. McKinley went on to fight at the battles of Kernstown, Berryville, Fisher's Hill and Cedar Creek and he ended the war as a brevet major. He became the third commander-in-chief to be assassinated when he was shot in 1901.

GEORGE HW BUSH

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1942-45 PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1989-1992



Born in 1924, George HW Bush is the last living former president to have seen combat in WWII. He enlisted in the US Navy on his 18th birthday in 1942 and when he became an airman in 1943, he was the service's youngest pilot. He was assigned to the Pacific theatre and flew 58 combat missions during the war aboard USS San Jacinto, flying Grumman TBM Avenger bombers.

On 2 September 1944, Bush was ordered to destroy a Japanese radio station in the Bonin Islands but his aircraft was hit by enemy fire. Although his Avenger was in flames, he continued strafing the target before bailing out close to an island near Iwo Jima. He was shortly rescued by a US submarine and was later awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism under fire.

Bush in his early twenties seated in his Grumman TBM Avenger on an aircraft carrier, 1944

DUTIES OF THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF

TODAY, THE PRESIDENT OF THE US IS ALWAYS PREPARED FOR WAR AND HAS MANY MILITARY ROLES TO PERFORM AWAY FROM POLITICS

Today, the responsibilities of commander-in-chief are multi-faceted. Each morning, the president receives a classified presidential daily briefing from his national security advisor, either in person or by tablet. The contents of this brief provides the president with new intelligence and alerts him to possible crises in the world.

This briefing forms part of the US Department of Defence, where chiefs of the four armed services all report directly to the president. Despite his powers, the president cannot declare war: the Constitution gives that right to Congress, however, a commander-in-chief can order wartime manoeuvres such as deploying troops and giving permission for air strikes, bombings and invasions.

Ultimately, the president is responsible for preserving peace at home and areas that involve American interests. A president

therefore also has the authority to protect US allies and enforce international treaties or call on military forces to quell civil disobedience.

The role is also ceremonial and the president receives troops returning home from military duty. The sitting president can also decide who should be recognised for outstanding service, which includes the awarding of the prestigious Medal of Honor.

As of October 2016, President Barack Obama has used his role as commander-in-chief to scale down large American forces abroad by ending the US combat missions in Iraq and Afghanistan. Obama is notable for preferring special operations and airstrikes over large numbers of infantry and this was prominently demonstrated in 2011 when he authorised the Navy SEAL operation which saw Osama bin Laden hunted down and killed.

PRESIDENTS OF THE WORLD WARS

NINE COMMANDERS-IN-CHIEF PARTICIPATED IN THE WORLD WARS BETWEEN 1917-45 WITH THE MAJORITY SERVING AT SEA



HARRY S TRUMAN

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1905-11, 1917-19
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1945-53

Truman was the only president to have seen combat in WWI. After serving in the Missouri National Guard between 1905-11, he rejoined his unit in 1917

when America joined the conflict. Promoted to captain, he commanded Battery D of 129th Field Artillery and was shipped to France. His battery had a reputation being unruly, but Truman turned it into an effective force. He first saw action in the Vosges Mountains in August 1918, and then the Meuse-Argonne offensive during September-October 1918. His battery fired some of the last shots of the war on 11 November 1918.



LYNDON B JOHNSON

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1940-64
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1963-1969

Congressman Johnson became a lieutenant commander in the US Naval Reserve in June 1940, aged 32. He spent six months in the Pacific theatre, primarily

as a congressional inspector of the war's progress in the region. While he was stationed in Australasia, he worked as an observer on bomber missions in the South Pacific. Johnson's only combat action occurred on 9 June 1942, when he volunteered as an observer on an airstrike mission over New Guinea by 11 B-26 bombers. He came under heavy fire and an engine failed, which forced the aircraft to return to base. Despite some controversy, Johnson was awarded the Silver Star medal for coolness under fire.



RICHARD NIXON

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1942-66
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1969-74

Nixon joined the US Naval Reserve on 15 June 1942, which for him personally was a surprising move. He was born and brought up as a Quaker and as such could

claim exemption from military service but instead of exploiting this, Nixon voluntarily enlisted and was commissioned as a lieutenant. He served as a transport officer in the South West Pacific theatre and although he saw no combat, he was recognised for his good service and received letters of commendation as well as medals. In one notable incident during the war, he won \$6,000 playing poker that he used to fund his first successful campaign for Congress.



GERALD FORD

YEARS IN SERVICE: 1942-46
PRESIDENTIAL TERM: 1974-77

Gerald Ford joined the US Naval Reserve in 1942 and the following year he was promoted lieutenant. He was assigned to the new aircraft carrier USS Monterey,

with roles as an assistant navigator and anti-aircraft battery officer. Between 1943-44, Ford and the Monterey took part in many actions in the Pacific assisting in carrier strikes, supporting island landings and the Battle of Philippine Sea. On one occasion, Monterey was caught in a typhoon in December 1944 and the ship rolled 25 degrees, causing Ford to lose his footing and slide towards edge of the deck. Ford managed to hold on to steel ridge on the edge of the carrier but he later stated, "I was lucky; I could have easily have gone overboard."



President Obama and his national security team monitor the progress of Operation Neptune Spear: the mission that saw Osama bin Laden killed

Image: Alamy, Getty, Thinkstock

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HUNTERS AT DAWN

by ROBERT TAYLOR

Gerhard Barkhorn leads Bf109s of II./JG-52 as they climb out from their base near the Black Sea, November 1943. Barkhorn finished WWII as the second highest scoring Ace in history with 301 victories.

This superb limited edition print is personally signed by prominent Luftwaffe Fighter Pilots.

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THE LAST BATTLE

11 NOVEMBER 1918

The final year of WWI was the bloodiest of the entire conflict. The killing didn't stop until the final minute, and in places it even continued...

WORDS NICK SOLDINGER

Seeking a comrade's grave. The scale of casualties in WWI meant that some men were buried where they fell or in communal graves

At 9.30am on 11 November 1918, in the dying moments of World War I, 40-year-old Private George Ellison of the 5th Royal Irish Lancers found himself on a scouting mission on the outskirts of the Belgian town of Mons. Father-of-one Ellison, a former coal miner from Leeds, had been in Mons before. Four years earlier, as part of the Expeditionary Force, he had participated the British Army's first battle of the war – one that had ended in humiliating defeat. Since then, Ellison had survived every murderous technological twist World War I had produced, from trench warfare and machine-gun fire to high-explosive shells and poison gas. As well as Mons, he'd also fought at Ypres, Lens, Loos and Cambrai, some of the costliest battles of the deadliest war the world had ever seen and yet, somehow, he emerged unscathed.

Just 90 minutes before the Armistice, Ellison and his comrades were on the orders of British high command to retake the town they had lost in 1914. As they were creeping through a wood, a hidden German infantryman lined George Ellison up in his sights.

The Russian Revolution of November 1917 changed everything. The entire dynamic of World War I suddenly shifted, as Germany found itself no longer fighting a war on two fronts, but one. With the collapse of the Eastern Front, German High Command could now concentrate all its efforts on its war in the west – efforts that would be reinvigorated by the freeing up of hundreds of thousands of men previously committed to vanquishing the tsar and his armies.

The Russian capitulation couldn't have come at a better time for the Germans. In April 1917, in response to German naval aggression in the north Atlantic and a bizarre diplomatic incident that had seen Germany attempt to spark a conflict between Mexico and the USA, the United States chose to side with Britain and France in their crusade against the kaiser.

Although American troops had not yet arrived in any great force, they were coming, and the Germans – not least their most influential commander, General Erich von Ludendorff – knew it.

Before the US troops had time to make a difference, Ludendorff now proposed that the

Germans on the Western Front should unleash a huge offensive. One that would finally break the three and a half-year deadlock of trench warfare, allowing German troops to seize Paris and end the war.

On 21 March 1918, that offensive began as the German army attacked along a 102-kilometre front. What became known as the Ludendorff Offensive was the biggest attack then known in modern industrialised warfare, around 10,000 artillery pieces simultaneously pounded the Allied lines. When the artillery bombardment lifted, lightly equipped, fast-moving shock troops (or storm troopers) raced across No-Man's Land, armed with flamethrowers, light machine guns and grenades. Their aim wasn't so much to seize forward trenches, but to infiltrate the rear of the Allied line, causing it to collapse, while heavy infantry mopped up the area in between.

It proved to be a devastatingly effective tactic. In just over a fortnight, the German army advanced 32 kilometres over an 80-kilometre front. A massive capture of territory compared to the stalemate of the previous three years. The first part of the offensive ended on 4 April,

“WHEN THE ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT LIFTED, LIGHTLY EQUIPPED, FAST-MOVING SHOCK TROOPS (OR STORM TROOPERS) RACED ACROSS NO-MAN'S LAND, ARMED WITH FLAMETHROWERS, LIGHT MACHINE GUNS AND GRENADES”

“LUDENDORFF’S TROOPS HAD ADVANCED 48 KILOMETRES TO REACH THE RIVER MARNE. THE GLITTERING PRIZE OF PARIS WAS NOW ON THE HORIZON”



A German war cemetery containing five thousand graves at Sully-sur-la-Lys, 12 October 1918



leaving the Allies dizzied and bloodied. Britain and France were now critically close to losing the war.

Ludendorff then set his sights on Paris, just 145 kilometres to the south of his line. If the Germans captured it, victory would be theirs. On 26 May, the German army renewed its offensive, and within four days, Ludendorff’s troops had advanced 48 kilometres to reach the River Marne. The glittering prize of Paris was now on the horizon.

These huge successes hadn’t come without a price, however. The German army had suffered about 350,000 casualties and had fought itself almost to a standstill. Although weak and exhausted, Ludendorff now demanded one last mighty push from his war-weary army.

On 15 July 1918, 52 German divisions attacked the Allied line. Having learned from previous encounters though, French defences were set well back and when German Storm Troopers reached them, they proved to have been out of range of their artillery support. Undamaged, they easily withstood the German assault. Ludendorff’s gamble had failed and it was now the Allies’ turn to go on the offensive.

In a series of massive co-ordinated blows that heralded the birth of modern battlefield tactics, the full power of the Allied war machine would now be unleashed against the shattered German forces

A hint of what was to come occurred at the Battle of Hamel in the Somme Valley on 4 July 1918, when an Australian division pulled off a small-scale, pulverising attack on

the Germans. With infantry advancing behind tanks, supported by masses of heavy artillery, machine-gun fire and aircraft providing top cover, the Australians swiftly overwhelmed German positions that had remained unbreached for years.

This pioneering assault convinced the combined French and British forces – now under the command of France’s Marshal Ferdinand Foch – to repeat the tactic, but on a much grander scale. On 8 August, a huge attack was launched near the town of Amiens, spearheaded by 530 British and 70 French tanks. It was the beginning of what became known as the 100-day offensive, and it would finally win the Allies the war.

On the first day alone, the Allies advanced 12 kilometres, inflicting some 27,000 casualties on the bewildered Germans. This kind of fluid warfare had not been seen on the Western Front since 1914. Over the next month, the Allies pushed the Germans back a further 40 kilometres over a 65-kilometre front.

By now, American troops were also arriving en masse. Under the command of General John J Pershing, they numbered more than 1 million by July 1918, and by mid-September 1918, they were ready to launch their first attack as an independent army. Their target was the wedge of territory held by the Germans known as the Saint-Mihiel salient. The assault lasted



Left: Relaxed Irish Guardsmen still at their posts, some five minutes before the signing of the armistice



An engraving of the armistice signed in a train carriage at Compiègne, France at 5am on 11 November 1918

three days and was another overwhelming Allied victory. A few days later, American forces, now battle proven, joined the British and French for a major attack on the German army's key defensive rear position – the Hindenburg Line.


The Hindenburg Line was Germany's insurance policy. Built in the winter of 1916-17, it was intended to halt any Allied breakthrough, and its network of deep trench systems, bunkers, concrete pillboxes and tangle of barbed wire had already proved its invincibility during the Battle of Arras the previous year. For the average Allied soldier, attacking

“ATTACKING THE HINDENBURG LINE WAS SEEN AS A SUICIDE MISSION, BUT IN SEPTEMBER 1918, THAT WAS EXACTLY WHAT THEY WERE ORDERED TO DO”

the Hindenburg Line was seen as a suicide mission, but in September 1918, that was exactly what they were ordered to do.


In the last week of that month, 123 Allied divisions consisting of about 500,000 men gathered for the onslaught. Foch demanded

that his troops fight a fast, fluid action. The stalemate of trench warfare that had turned the Western Front into a meat grinder for so many years would soon be a thing of the past. With ever more accurate artillery barrages destroying enemy defences, and with tanks and aircraft




THE FINAL CASUALTIES


THE MEN WHO WERE KILLED WITH JUST MINUTES TO GO



AUGUSTIN TRÉBUCHON
Trébuchon was a runner with the 415th Infantry Regiment. At 10.45am on Armistice Day, he was halfway between Sedan and Charleville-Mézières when he was shot by a sniper. He'd been despatched to deliver a message to frontline troops that soup would be served at 11.30am in celebration of the ceasefire.



PRIVATE GEORGE LAWRENCE PRICE
Price was part of a Canadian patrol ordered to take the village of Harvré. Approaching it, they came under machine-gun fire. Assaulting the house where the fire had come from, Price's unit was abandoned. When he stepped into the street to investigate further, a sniper killed him. It was 10.58am.



SERGEANT HENRY GUNTHER
On Armistice Day, Gunther's squad was ordered to destroy a roadblock defended by machine guns in the village of Chaumont-devant-Damvillers. In a last bid for a medal, Gunther single-handedly charged the position. Despite shouts from the Germans to stop, he ran at them, firing until he was shot at precisely 10.59am.

THE LAST BATTLE

supporting, and even resupplying the infantry, Foch's ambition for a war of movement was quickly realised.

Despite suffering thousands of casualties, the Allies broke through the once-impregnable Hindenburg Line in just three days, capturing it on 29 September. It was a huge psychological blow to the Germans. Even Ludendorff, Germany's most bellicose commander, could see Germany's situation was desperate. He then argued that an armistice should be sought while his troops still retained some ability to inflict damage. At least that way, he hoped to bargain for a peace settlement that preserved German pride and perhaps its territory.

Back in January 1918, President Woodrow Wilson had proposed a 14-point peace plan that would have produced an honourable, peaceful solution for all sides. Rejected at the time, it now seemed a highly attractive proposition to the Germans, who approached the USA in the hope of getting it ratified. However, a lot had happened since January and the Americans – who had suffered terrible losses – were no longer interested in a compromise. If Germany wanted peace, they would have to pay for it, and before that conversation could even happen, the kaiser would have to go. To traditionalists like Ludendorff, the abolition of the German



Men of the US 105th Field Artillery cheer for the camera after the armistice was announced

monarchy was totally unthinkable. Germany's army should fight to the death defending its kaiser, or so he believed, and so the olive branch was withdrawn. But Ludendorff's militaristic idealism was about to be undone by political pragmatism.

By mid-October 1918, the German home front was on the brink of collapse. The Allied naval blockade had cut off much of the country's food supply and its people were now starving. Riots – many of them left wing in

flavour – were breaking out on German streets as the people challenged an authority that had led them to the brink of calamity. Germany's army was now too running dangerously short of supplies, while its navy was on the brink of mutiny. Then – on 26 October – the kaiser, under pressure from senior politicians, relieved the ever-loyal Ludendorff of his command. Massive changes were now afoot.

On 8 November 1918, German and French negotiators met in a railway carriage in

THE CONTINUING WAR

FOR SIX HOURS AFTER PEACE WAS AGREED, POINTLESS KILLING CONTINUED ALL ALONG THE WESTERN FRONT

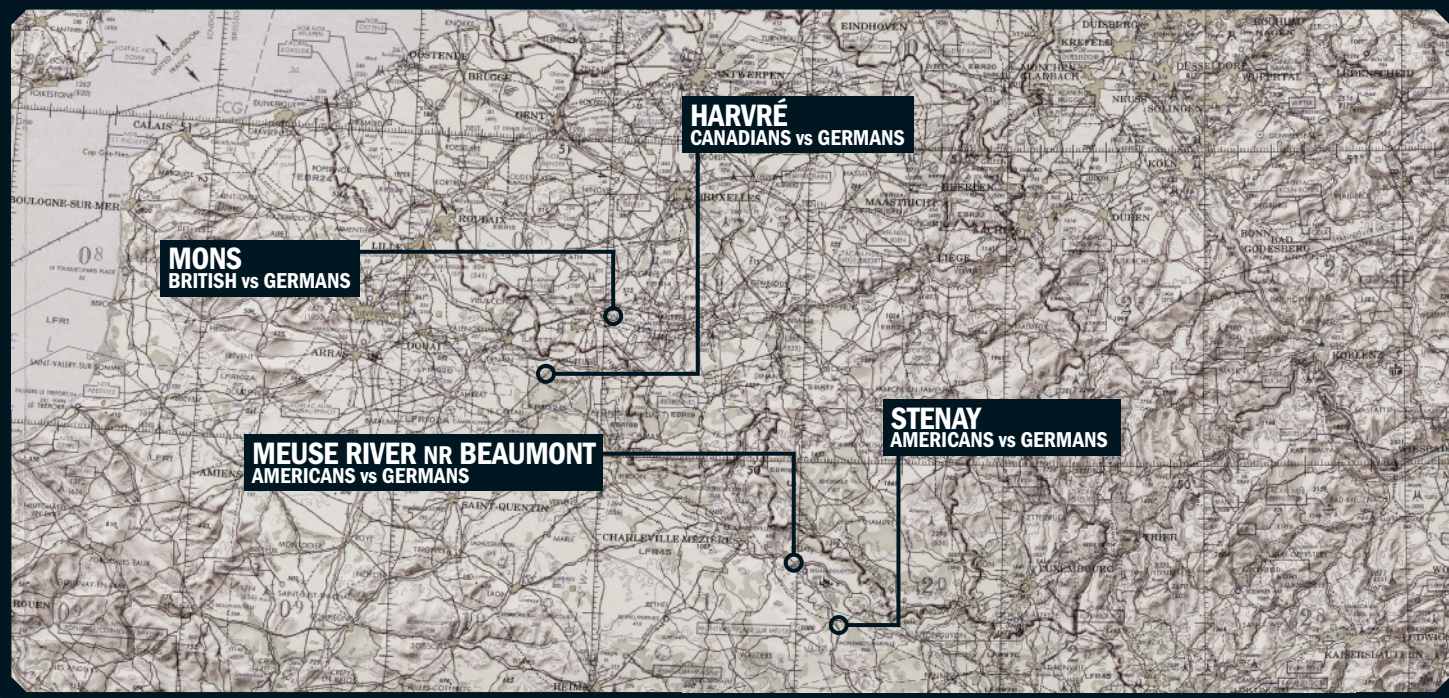
After the armistice was signed, fighting continued all along the Western Front. As well as Mons, bitter fighting also continued further west at Harvré in northern France between Canadian and German troops. But it was the Americans who were keenest to keep killing until the final moment. Commander General Pershing believed that the German army needed to be comprehensively crushed, and many of his officers were only too happy to take one last grab at glory.

For example, as the clock ticked down to peace, first the commander of the 1st Division, General Charles Summerall, ordered US Marines under his command to cross the Meuse River near Beaumont. With hastily assembled pontoon bridges, they assaulted German positions on the far side, only to be scythed down as they crossed. Summerall's order caused more than 1,100 casualties.

Elsewhere on the Meuse at the town of Stenay, General William Wright of the 89th American Division had heard

there were bathing facilities in the town, and ordered its capture from the Germans. His troops took it just before 11am, suffering about 350 casualties in the process. In all, Western Front casualties on all sides in the final six hours of the war totalled 10,944.

“MANY OF HIS OFFICERS WERE ONLY TOO HAPPY TO TAKE ONE LAST GRAB AT GLORY”



ANARCHY AFTER THE ARMISTICE

ROBERT GERWARTH IS PROFESSOR OF MODERN HISTORY AT UNIVERSITY COLLEGE DUBLIN, AND DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE FOR WAR STUDIES. HIS NEW BOOK, *THE VANQUISHED*, EXPLORES THE TURBULENT YEARS IN THE AFTERMATH OF WWI



THE ARMISTICE OF 1918 WAS THE END OF HOSTILITIES BETWEEN THE GREAT POWERS, BUT WAS THERE STILL OPEN CONFLICT BETWEEN CERTAIN STATES AFTER 11 NOVEMBER?

While 11 November brought peace to the principal victor states of the Great War – France, the US, and Britain (minus Ireland) – the same cannot be said about the defeated, or indeed about Greece and Italy. For much of Europe, notably in its eastern half, the Great War was followed between 1918 and 1923 by a series of vicious inter-state wars, civil wars and other episodes of ethnic violence, killing more people than the combined wartime casualties of Britain, France and the US.

TO WHAT EXTENT DID THE 'VICTORS' OF WWI EXACERBATE UNREST AND CONFLICT ACROSS THE CONTINENT BETWEEN 1917-23?

The influence that the Western peacemakers in Paris in 1919 had over large swathes of territory in Eastern Europe has, perhaps, been exaggerated. The Western Allies had no meaningful military presence in that part of the world and could not call off the conflicts in the same way that hostilities could be brought to a halt in the west on 11 November 1918. That said, one of the most dangerous (though initially idealistic) concepts of the time was US President Woodrow Wilson's promise of national self-determination for the successor states of Europe's continental empires.

In 1918-19, Europe was fundamentally transformed from a continent dominated by land empires to a collection of new 'nation-states' that aspired to ethnic exclusivity while simultaneously being every bit as multi-ethnic as their imperial predecessors. Aggrieved minorities within these new nation-states were a distinctly radicalising force in European politics for the next three decades. In retrospect, one has to acknowledge that the multi-ethnic empires of Europe – though far from perfect – were better at dealing with the remarkable ethnic complexity of east and central Europe than the nation-states of subsequent decades. One obvious example here is that of the Jews of the Habsburg Empire. Up until 1918, they had been offered legal equality and security, but after the end of the Habsburg Empire, Jews were accused of being 'community aliens' or supporters of Bolshevism, and as such they were often violently persecuted.

One could also argue that the peace treaties of Paris, imposed on the democratic successor states of the defeated Central Powers, did little to appease revisionist nationalism in those countries. The democratic revolutions in central Europe of 1918-19 were henceforth associated by the political right with the defeat of 1918 and the 'dictated' peace treaties, which they had to accept. The democrats of Germany, Austria, Bulgaria and Hungary certainly had not been responsible for the outcome of the war, but that did not matter in the public perception.

WHY WERE THE GREAT POWERS UNWILLING TO INTERVENE IN SUBSEQUENT CONFLICTS, SUCH AS THE SOVIET-POLISH WAR? WHAT COULD THE CONSEQUENCES HAVE BEEN HAD THEY DONE SO?

Neither Britain nor France had any appetite for major military interventions after the horrors of the Great War. When the Americans proposed to march on Berlin and finish the war with a decisive victory, neither the French nor the British felt that a costly invasion of Germany proper could be communicated to their populations after four years of death and hardships. The home fronts would have had even less sympathy for military engagement in Eastern Europe. There was popular support in both countries for an independent Poland (if only to check German power from the east), but not at the price of more British or French soldiers' lives.

Both countries did intervene in the Russian Civil War, on the side of the 'whites', but the intervention forces were small in size and did not change the outcome (Lenin's ultimate victory in the Russian Civil War).

Lloyd George was also instrumental in escalating the Greco-Turkish War by encouraging Greek Prime Minister Venizelos to land in the western Anatolian port city of Smyrna, which had a Christian majority among its population. The result was a disaster, as Turkish nationalists under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal rallied in response to the Greek invasion. After an extremely brutal three-year war, which saw countless atrocities on both sides, the Turks re-took Smyrna amid much bloodshed. This was followed by the Great Population Exchange – the involuntary expulsion of well over 1 million Christian Ottomans and Greek Muslims, that set a dangerous precedent for a century of expulsions.

WHAT IN YOUR OPINION WAS THE KEY EVENT PREVENTING UNIVERSAL PEACE DURING THE YEARS FOLLOWING THE ARMISTICE AND WHY?

The continuation of violence in many parts of Europe had several causes, but it is clear that three of them are particularly important throughout the continent. The first cause is the way in which World

War I destroyed old structures without replacing them with stable new ones.

The Great War – a conflict between states, largely fought on military fronts – became the unintentional enabler of different, and ultimately even more ungovernable, forms of violence by leaving huge power vacuums in large parts of the continent. Power vacuums in which rival political and ethnic groups fought against each other over the future form and shape of the states that should succeed the collapsed land empires. The dismantling of the land empires – and this is the second root cause of the violence that escalated in Europe after 1918 – and their replacement with aggressively insecure nation-states was something that was only adopted as an Allied war aim in early 1918. From our vantage point today, it is clear that the history of many of those successor states until 1945 (and in the case of Yugoslavia and the Middle East until much later) was not an unqualified success story.

Thirdly, it is impossible to write a history of the post-war conflicts without mentioning the effects of the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 on both Russia and the rest of Europe. The successful coup of a relatively small group of Bolsheviks meant that – for the first time since the French Revolution of 1789 – a radical revolution had triumphed in one of Europe's principal states. The knock-on effects were enormous: on the political left, Lenin's October Revolution was seen as an inspiration, a model that was to be followed. On the political right, the Russian Revolution was seen as the realisation of the worst nightmare: the triumph of the working classes over the old order, the abolishment of private property and upper class privilege. Even in countries that were not threatened by a Communist revolution, the post-war years saw a massive mobilisation of armed groups of the right, determined to destroy Bolshevism (and its 'carriers'). The sometimes abstract and sometimes concrete fear of Bolshevism had a profound impact on interwar Europe, and neither Mussolini's ascent or that of Hitler can be fully explained without that historical backdrop.



Turkish soldiers wait in their trenches, ready to engage the Greeks during the Greco-Turkish war of 1919-1922

Robert Gerwarth's new book, *The Vanquished*, is published by Allen Lane

the French forest of Compiègne. The Allied delegation, led by the bitter Marshal Foch, whose own son had been lost in the war, were in no mood to negotiate. Without discussion, the vengeful Foch simply handed the Germans a list of 34 demands telling them they had 72 hours to agree or risk annihilation.

By the time the German delegation eventually returned to the railway carriage to sign the armistice in the early hours of 11 November, Kaiser Wilhelm had resigned and had fled to Holland where he would live out the rest of his days in exile. In the intervening three days, about 7,500 troops on all sides had lost their lives fighting in a war that was effectively over.

Both sides agreed upon and signed the armistice at 5am but – despite German requests for an immediate ceasefire – the Allies insisted that an end to hostilities should be delayed until 11am that morning, that way the word could reach all of its commanders. As the news broke across London, Paris and New York, jubilant crowds began to gather to celebrate. During the six hours between the signing and the ceasefire, however, there was to be no let up in the bloody slaughter, with the killing continuing.

Different units heard about the armistice at different times, and when the order was given, other than to cease hostilities at 11am, it was left to local (often green) commanders to decide how they'd spend what remained of the war. For some military commanders, it meant standing their troops down, shaking their hands and thanking them for their sacrifice. For others, however, it was a fast fading opportunity for glory, promotion and perhaps one last medal.



The left-wing Spartacist uprising threatened to engulf Germany after the war

“IT’S A SHAME WE CAN’T GO IN AND DEVASTATE GERMANY, CUT OFF A FEW OF THE GERMAN KIDS’ HANDS AND FEET AND SCALP A FEW OF THEIR OLD MEN”

As the countdown to peace began, artillery on both sides unleashed terrifying bombardments, as if to use up every last round of ammunition while they still could. Thousands of shells fell at random, killing and wounding men just hours from safety. One such bombardment was ordered by an American artillery captain who later wrote to his fiancé, “It’s a shame we can’t go in and devastate Germany, cut off a few of the German kids’ hands and feet and scalp a few of their old men.” The officer in question was

future US President Harry S Truman, the man who would sanction the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the World War II.

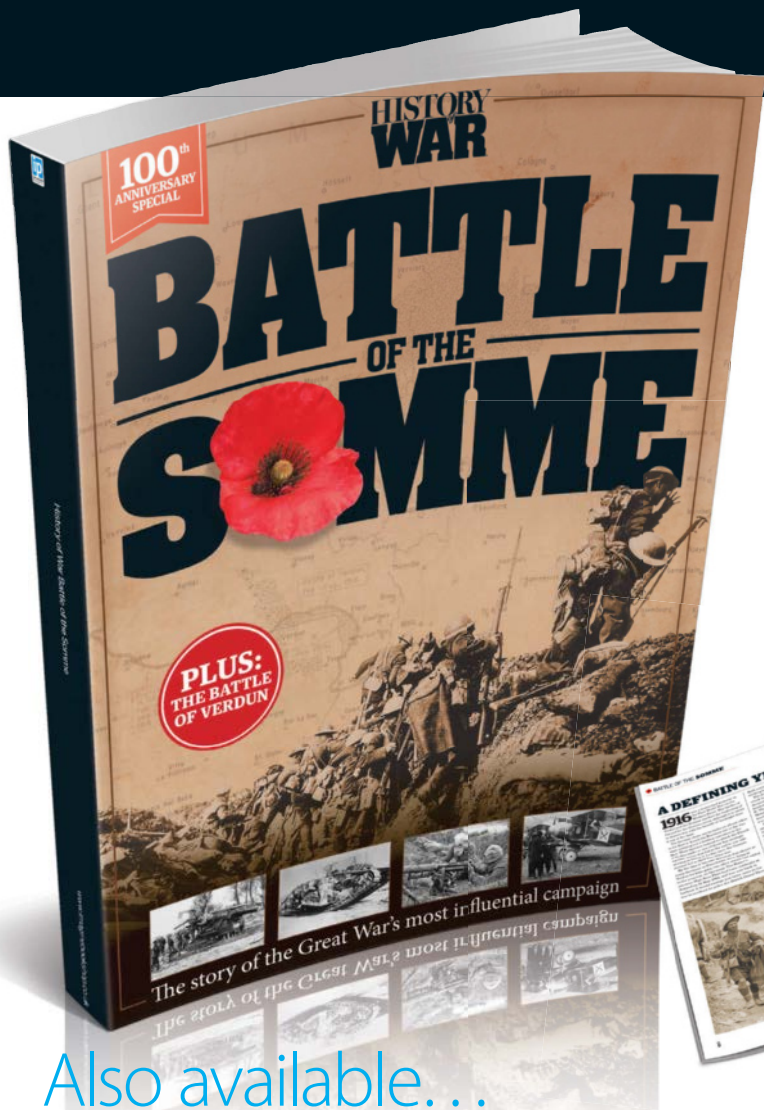
Elsewhere on the line, troops were being ordered into action for one last crack at the enemy. Men like Private Ellison, the Leeds coalminer and father of one who was killed at 9.30am as the British army symbolically retook Mons to end the war – 700,000 British lives later – in exactly the same place it had begun it four years before.

Jubilant civilians and servicemen celebrate the end of hostilities in London



Images: Alamy, Getty, TopFoto

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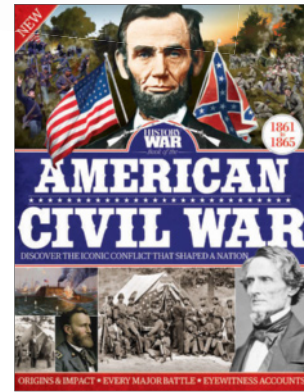
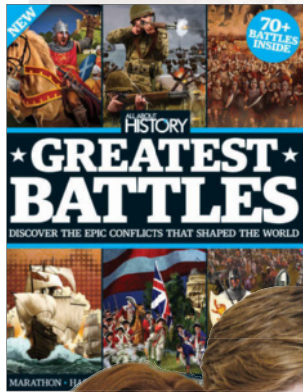


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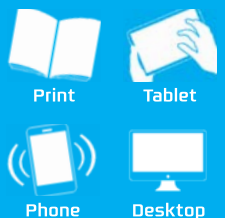
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OPPOSING FORCES



vs



COALITION ARMY

LEADERS

Field Marshal Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick and Frederick William II

TROOPS

34,000

GUNS

54

RESERVES

15,000

FRENCH ARMY

LEADERS

General Charles Francois Dumouriez and General Francois Christophe Kellermann

TROOPS

36,000

GUNS

36

RESERVES

18,000

The crowded French centre is defended by blue-jacketed citizen volunteers (left) and white-uniformed regulars (right)



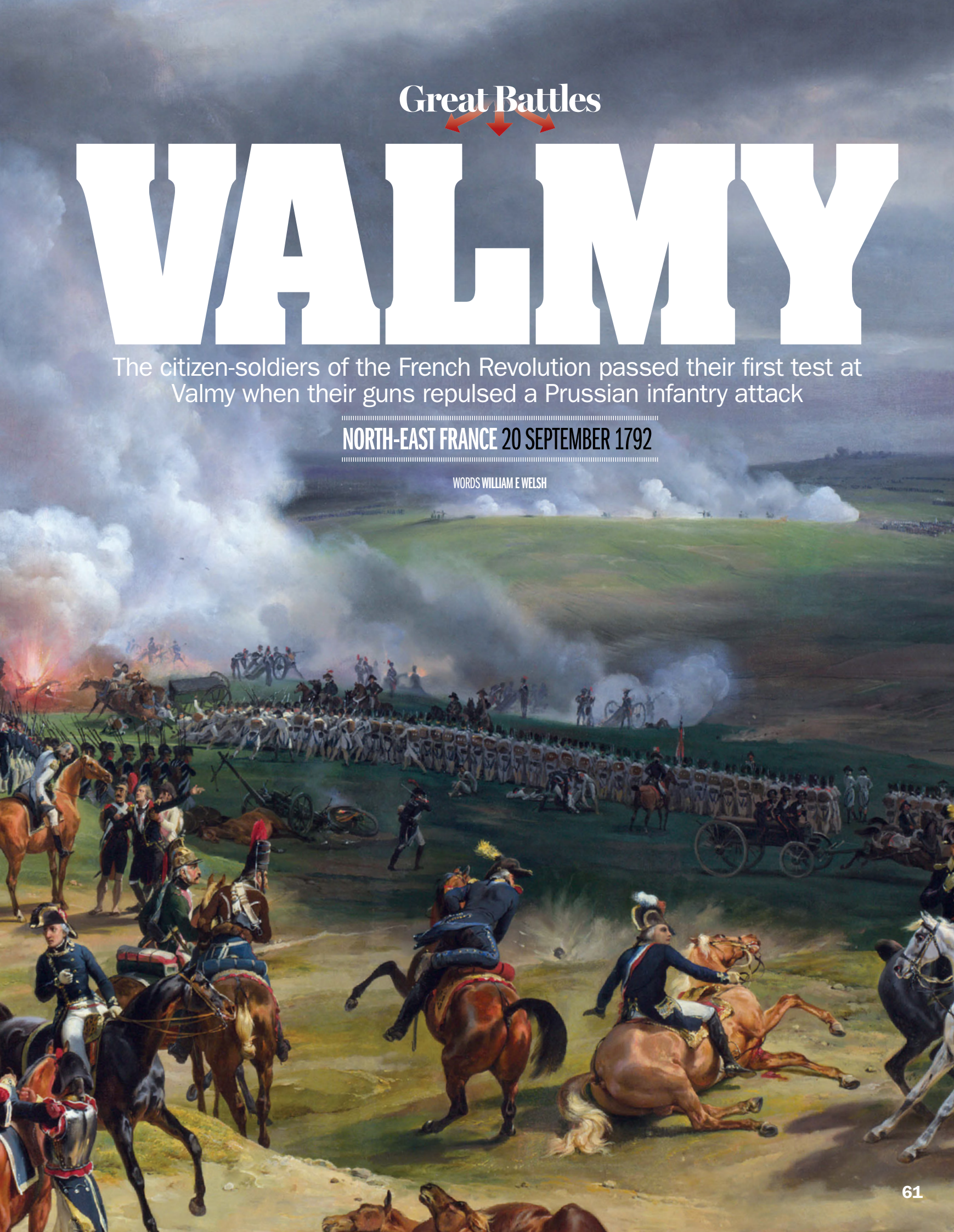
Great Battles

WALGMY

The citizen-soldiers of the French Revolution passed their first test at Valmy when their guns repulsed a Prussian infantry attack

NORTH-EAST FRANCE 20 SEPTEMBER 1792

WORDS WILLIAM E WELSH



An artillery shell, fired from one of the Prussian cannons atop the Heights of La Lune, roared through the air and slammed into a French ammunition cart near the windmill of Valmy at 2pm on 20 September 1792. The cart exploded into flames sending a plume of black smoke roiling into the air. As the shells in the cart cooked off, they touched off secondary explosions in two adjacent carts. Fearful of being struck by shrapnel, blue-coated French volunteers scurried for cover, leaving holes in the French line.

More than 900 metres to the west, Charles William Ferdinand, Duke of Brunswick, peered with satisfaction through his telescope at the havoc the explosions created among the tightly packed enemy ranks. Turning to his staff, he issued orders for the Prussian infantry to deploy in two lines for an assault on the French position. Recalling how a brigade of Prussian hussars had stampeded an entire French division just a few days earlier, Brunswick believed the French commander would order a general retreat once the well-dressed Prussian infantry began its advance. With the French forced to retreat south away from Paris, the Prussian army could resume its drive on the French capital.

Three summers before, on 14 July 1789, Parisians fed up with the French monarchy's obstruction of reforms had stormed the Bastille, the oppressive fortress of the monarch, King Louis XVI of France. It was the first outbreak of violence in what would become one of the bloodiest revolutions in modern European history. The turbulence within France compelled 6,000 officers of the French royal army to leave the country. Once outside France, the émigrés plotted with sympathetic foreign powers to stamp out the fires of revolution.

Unable to bear the thought of a limited monarchy, King Louis tried to flee the country in June 1791. He had hoped to reach the Austrian Netherlands where he would join the émigrés in overthrowing the revolutionaries and restoring the Ancien Régime. He never made it. The fugitive king was apprehended in Lorraine and dragged back to Paris in disgrace.

War loomed on the horizon as 1791 drew to a close. Idealistic men throughout France responded to the assembly's call for volunteers. Prussian King Frederick William II and Austrian King Leopold II agreed between themselves that the best course of action was to invade France, crush the revolutionaries and restore Louis. They formally announced a military alliance in February 1792 that led to

the formation of the First Coalition. Two months later, France declared war on Austria. Prussia, Austria and Savoy positioned forces alongside France's eastern border where they were joined by the émigrés. If Louis was unable to come to them, they would come to him.

The coalition chose the Duke of Brunswick to lead the Austro-Prussian invasion force. A nephew of Frederick the Great, 56-year-old Brunswick was a cautious commander who believed in fighting a war by manoeuvre rather than sluggish battles. Prussian King William accompanied the army into France.

Brunswick's adversary was 53-year-old French general Charles Francois Dumouriez. In August 1792, the French revolutionary government appointed Dumouriez and 57-year-old General Francois de Kellermann to command France's Army of the North and Army of the Centre respectively. Both men were brave, self-confident and charismatic. French minister of war Joseph Marie Servan de Gerbey co-ordinated the movements of both armies from Paris. The challenge facing the French commanders was to meld an army composed of regulars from the old army with volunteers of questionable quality.

Kellermann may have found the answer. To enhance the stability of his infantry brigades, he combined one battalion of regulars with two battalions of volunteers. He believed this was the best way to remedy the tendency of the volunteers to panic in combat. The battle that loomed on the horizon would test his new idea.

Although it seemed as if the veteran Prussian army had enormous advantages, this was not the case. First, the Prussians had a flawed logistics system. The cumbersome and

“AS CHAZOT’S INFANTRY MARCHED THROUGH THE FIELDS NEAR MONCHEUTIN, PRUSSIAN HUSSARS CHARGED THEM. CAUGHT OFF GUARD, THE FRENCH PANICKED, ‘WE ARE BETRAYED. ALL IS LOST,’ CHAZOT’S MEN CRIED AS THEY FLED FROM THE PRUSSIAN CAVALRY”

The storming of the Tuileries Palace prompted coalition forces to march on France



“CONTINUAL RAIN THROUGHOUT THE CAMPAIGN MADE THE LIVES OF BRUNSWICK’S SOLDIERS MISERABLE”

ineffective Prussian commissariat hobbled the army throughout the campaign. Second, the Prussian artillery corps was inferior to its French counterpart. The French artillery had instituted sweeping reforms beginning in 1776 under the inspector of artillery, Jean-Baptiste Vaquette de Gribeauval. The guns had interchangeable parts and were manufactured on lighter carriages. Due to the prestige associated with serving in the French artillery, the veteran artillerymen had not defected from the army like many of the infantrymen.

Brunswick’s plan was for Austrian and Prussian forces to unite in Lorraine and fight their way to Paris. The Prussian main body departed Coblenz on 3 August. Advancing at a snail’s pace, the Prussians did not reach the border for almost three weeks. The French border fortresses of Longwy and Verdun were lightly garrisoned and they fell to the coalition force on 23 August and 3 September respectively.

The next challenge for Brunswick was to get his army through the woods and swamps of the Argonne Forest. The forest could only be traversed by a large army on five major roads. The Prussian encampment at Verdun lay on the road to Chalons. It passed through the villages of Clermont, Les Islettes and Sainte-Menehould before debauching onto a plateau near Valmy.

Continual rain throughout the campaign made the lives of Brunswick’s soldiers miserable. The Prussians remained at Verdun for one week, and the officers made no attempt to ensure

that they had proper sanitation. The long delay at Verdun was due, in large parts, to a disagreement between Brunswick and King William over the next stage of the campaign. Brunswick wanted to postpone a further advance until the following spring when the weather improved. During that time, the Prussians would establish forward bases with food and ammunition to support a spring offensive. But King William vetoed Brunswick’s plan because he believed that Louis XVI’s life was at stake, and therefore it was imperative to reach Paris as soon as possible. In the end, the king prevailed.

At the start of the Prussian offensive, Dumouriez was in Valenciennes. He led his troops south to Sedan, arriving in the city on the Meuse River on 28 August. Three days later, he received orders from Servan instructing him to intercept Brunswick. To assist Dumouriez with that task, Servan ordered Kellermann, who was based at Metz, to join him as soon as possible.

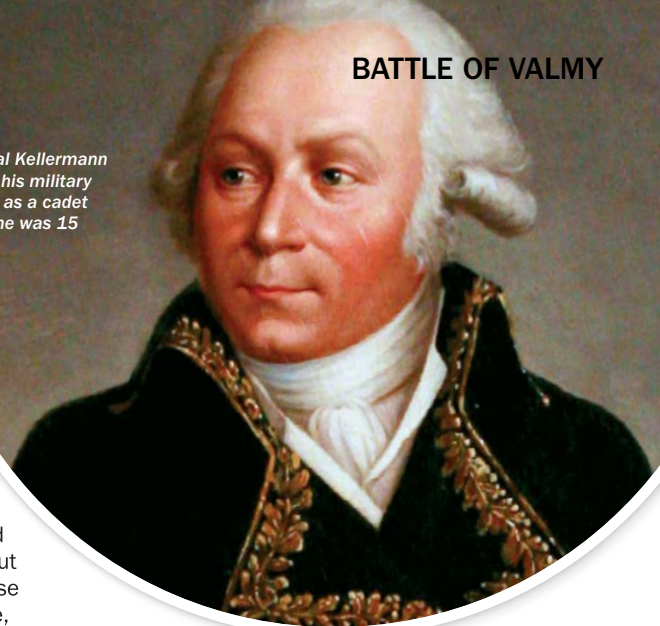
Advancing on the right and left of the Prussian main body were two smaller armies. Marching on Brunswick’s right flank was an Austrian army led by Francois de Croix, count of Clerfayt, and advancing on his left flank was a Prussian army led by Frederick William, prince of Hohenlohe-Kirchberg.

When Clerfayt crossed the Meuse upstream from Sedan at Stenay on 31 August, Dumouriez

was forced to fall back west. He marched through the Argonne Forest and took up a position on 4 September at Grandpre, blocking the middle road through the Argonne. Prone to grumbling when things went badly, Brunswick reluctantly led his army north from Verdun on 10 September. The Prussian main body marched a short distance to Landres and halted. This put them directly opposite the French army at Grandpre.

Dumouriez had left a minor detachment at Croix Au Bois on his left flank, which covered the lower of two northern roads through the Argonne. On 12 September, Clerfayt’s Austrian hussars scattered the 100 French muskets guarding the defile. A French counterattack the following day by a division-sized force under General Jean Pierre Chazot failed to retake the pass.

General Kellermann began his military career as a cadet when he was 15



The National Guard of Paris rides out to join the French Revolutionary Army

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The French main body broke camp on 15 September heading south towards Sainte-Menehould. Dumouriez had ordered Chazot to follow him. As Chazot's infantry marched through the fields near Moncheutin, Prussian hussars charged them. Caught off guard, the French panicked, "We are betrayed. All is lost." Chazot's men cried as they fled from the Prussian cavalry.

Dumouriez was deploying his forces east of Valmy to await Kellermann when he learned of the rout. He rode north to help round up as many of the demoralised troops as possible. Brunswick, whose army was having a difficult time crossing through the Argonne on muddy roads, did not take advantage of the situation.

Dumouriez's decision to bivouac near Valmy was driven by his need to unite as soon as possible with Kellermann, who had at last arrived on 18 September. Kellermann immediately tied into Dumouriez's left flank, extending it across the Chalons Road. He also sent a blocking force a kilometre west that deployed pickets at the roadside inn of La Lune. Dumouriez, for his part, ordered General Henri Christian Stengel to take up a forward position with a reinforced brigade on Mount Yron directly north of Valmy. The French army was further strengthened by the arrival of General Pierre de Ruel, marquis of Beurnonville, with a corps that had been guarding Chalons.

The Prussian main body completed its passage through the Argonne on 18 September. The following day it turned south and its vanguard had reached Somme-Bionne, which lay less than four kilometres from the French line. As the Prussians concentrated, Dumouriez and Kellermann engaged in a heated conversation about the best placement of Kellermann's units. Dumouriez advised him to deploy on the low hills around Valmy, but Kellermann favoured deploying on the south side of the Auve River. If the Prussians attacked, his men would be in a much better defensive position behind the river, insisted Kellermann. Since Dumouriez was not his superior, Kellermann was free to do as he saw best, so issued orders for the majority of his troops to cross the Auve in the morning.

A thick fog blanketed the hills and valleys of western Lorraine on the morning of 20 September. The prince of Hohenlohe, whose

Below: A French postage stamp commemorating the battle, from 1971

CANNON DUEL IN LORRAINE

THE FIELD OF VALMY WAS AN ARTILLERIST'S DREAM, FOR THE GUNNERS ENJOYED CLEAR, UNINTERRUPTED FIELDS OF FIRE. IN THE DAY-LONG CANNON CONTEST, THE FRENCH PREVAILED BECAUSE OF SUPERIOR EQUIPMENT AND MARKSMANSHIP



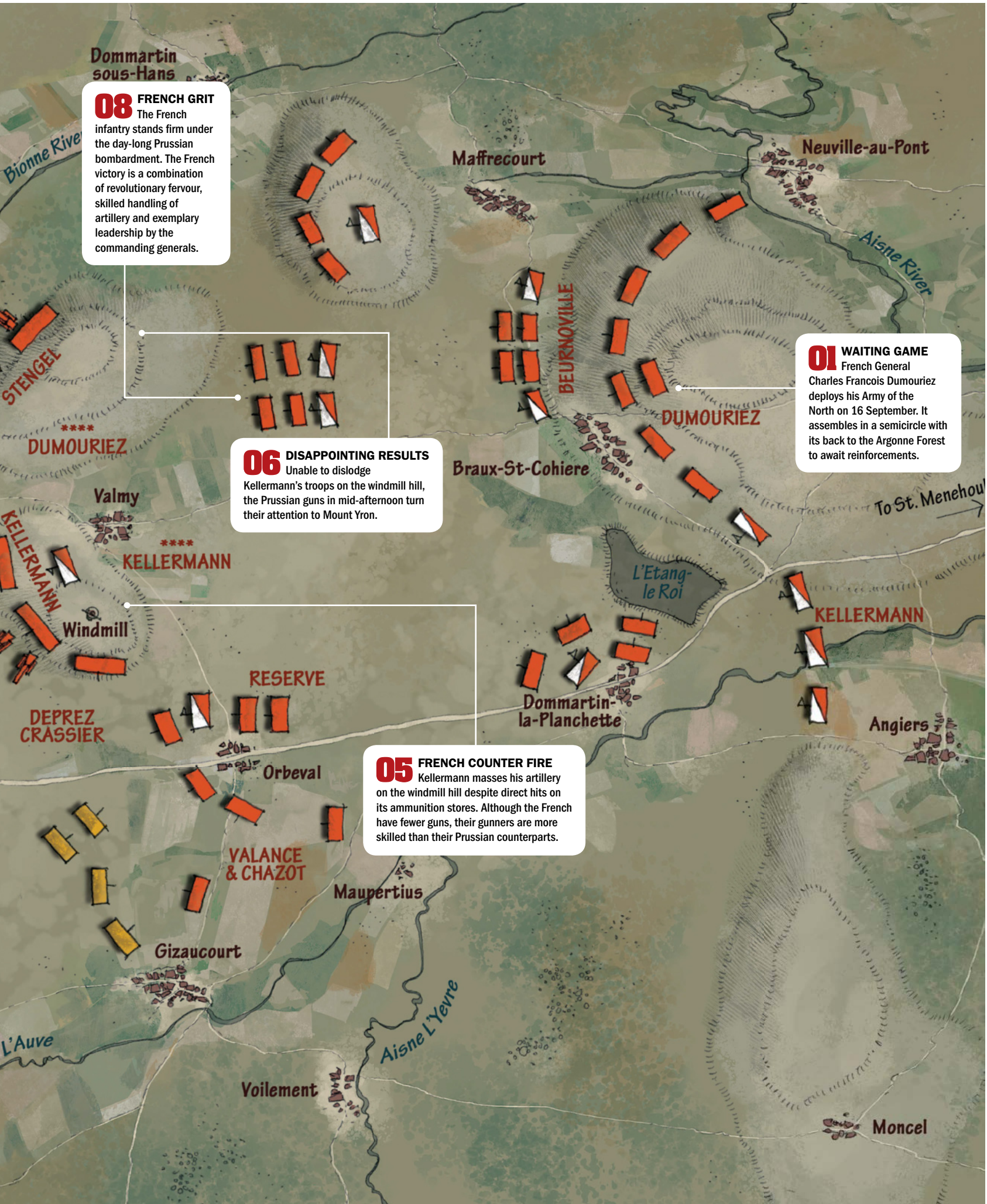
07 FRENCH ARTILLERY TRIUMPHS
The Prussian infantry attempts to advance twice, but both times its lines become disordered under the blistering fire of the French guns and are forced to halt and reform.

04 PRUSSIAN BOMBARDMENT
The Prussians deploy all of their guns in the hope that the French volunteers will not be able to endure the thunderous shelling.

03 OPENING CLASH
The Prussian vanguard captures the French outpost at the Inn of La Lune, which expands the field of fire for its artillery.

02 BLOCKING POSITION
General Francois Kellermann and the Marquis of Beurnonville arrive on 19 September with reinforcements. Kellermann blocks the Verdun-Chalons Road, forcing the Prussians to attack if they wish to shorten their supply line to Germany.





Dommartin sous-Hans

08 FRENCH GRIT

The French infantry stands firm under the day-long Prussian bombardment. The French victory is a combination of revolutionary fervour, skilled handling of artillery and exemplary leadership by the commanding generals.

01 WAITING GAME

French General Charles Francois Dumouriez deploys his Army of the North on 16 September. It assembles in a semicircle with its back to the Argonne Forest to await reinforcements.

06 DISAPPOINTING RESULTS

Unable to dislodge Kellermann's troops on the windmill hill, the Prussian guns in mid-afternoon turn their attention to Mount Yron.

05 FRENCH COUNTER FIRE

Kellermann masses his artillery on the windmill hill despite direct hits on its ammunition stores. Although the French have fewer guns, their gunners are more skilled than their Prussian counterparts.

GREAT BATTLES

troops had joined the Prussian main body, led the advance south at 6am. Hohenlohe's troops were needed for the approaching battle to maintain the fighting strength of the Prussian army. Many of Brunswick's troops had succumbed to dysentery as a result of unsanitary campsites.

A French battery opened fire on the Prussian Advanced Guard as it pushed south along the Heights of La Lune. Hohenlohe ordered a Prussian battery to engage it. When Kellermann heard the cannonading to his west, he countermanded his order to deploy south of the Aube. He decided the best option was to deploy west of Valmy as Dumouriez had suggested. Because of this, Kellermann's Army of the Centre would bear the brunt of the fighting that day, and Dumouriez would feed reinforcements to him as needed.

Kellermann instructed General Etienne Desprez-Crassier, who commanded the advanced guard of the Army of the Centre, to take up a position on the north side of the Chalons Road at Orbeval, 1.5 kilometres east of La Lune. He ordered General Jean-Baptiste Valence, who commanded the Army of the Centre's reserve, to extend the French line south of the Chalons Road to the Aube River. While these troops were marching to the sound of the firing, at 7am Kellermann led the main body of his army across the fields towards a low hill west of Valmy, topped by a windmill. Although the French could hear the Prussians and vice versa, the landscape remained engulfed in fog, which prevented the opposing lines from seeing each other.

Hohenlohe's Advanced Guard had been reinforced with additional batteries, and he had most of the Prussian guns under his direct command that morning. While Prussian and French troops skirmished at La Lune, Hohenlohe ordered six batteries to unlimber their guns on the Heights of La Lune. When the fog burned off later in the day, the battlefield of Valmy would prove itself to be an artillerist's dream. From their positions atop low hills, the artillery crews of both sides would enjoy expansive, virtually uninterrupted fields of fire.

Kellermann had sent as many as two dozen regiments, as well as four artillery batteries to deploy on the low rise west of Valmy. The

King Louis Philippe I returns to Valmy 39 years after the battle where he commanded artillery in the Revolutionary Army



brigade and regimental commanders had their hands full getting the battalions deployed effectively, but the fog helped to conceal the confusion from the Prussians. Dumouriez was not idle and ordered Chazot to take the equivalent of a division and reinforce the French left flank at Orbeval. He also ordered Beurnonville to take his corps and position it behind Stengel to reinforce it if necessary. "The position was truly grand," Dumouriez wrote in his autobiography. Last, Dumouriez ordered General Alexis Leveneur to advance his division to the right of Stengel and to probe the Prussian left and weigh the possibility of a flank attack against it.

Across the rolling pastures, about 1.2 kilometres to the west, the Prussian forces moved from column to line, taking up a position behind the barking guns. As the Prussians had done throughout the campaign, they deployed in a leisurely fashion with no sense of urgency. Although the fog prevented them from knowing the enemy's strength, they squandered any chance to disrupt Kellermann's deployment. Brunswick arrived with King William at about mid-morning, and sent several members of his staff to reconnoitre the French left. Upon their return, they recommended that the Prussian guns should be directed at the French left. Once this was done, they believed that it might be possible to roll up

the French left flank. The fog began to slowly disperse in the second half of the morning; as it did, it revealed to the Prussians that the key to the French position was the hill where the windmill stood.

The French troops deployed around La Lune could not withstand the storm of Prussian shells that crashed and exploded all around them and soon withdrew east. Kellermann observed the retreat and ordered Chazot to counterattack but the Prussians had strengthened their position at La Lune and Chazot's men were sharply repulsed. By then it was late morning and the fog was almost completely lifted. The Prussian and French batteries, which were a kilometre apart, began a ferocious duel that would last for most of the day.

The weather improved by midday and a damp wind dispersed the last of the fog. The Prussians had thought that the French guns were covering a withdrawal, but realised their enemy was offering battle. At that moment, Kellermann raised his hat with its tricolour plume on his sword, "Vive la nation!" he cried. "Vive la nation! Vive la France! Vive Notre general!" his men shouted in response.

Kellermann's bravery inspired his men. "He occupied a dangerous post at the mill of Valmy, at which the fire was principally directed," wrote the 43-year-old writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, who had accompanied the Prussian army as an observer.

A reconstruction of the windmill near Valmy is today a key landmark of the battlefield



"WHEN THE FOG BURNED OFF LATER IN THE DAY, THE BATTLEFIELD OF VALMY WOULD PROVE ITSELF TO BE AN ARTILLERIST'S DREAM"



With the gunners able to clearly discern their targets, the artillery barrage unleashed by both sides grew in intensity. “In the afternoon, at 1pm, after a pause of some duration, it was at its height; the earth trembled quite in the most literal sense and still we saw not the slightest change in the positions,” wrote Goethe. But the damage the cannon balls inflicted was far less than would have been the case in dry weather. The spherical shots normally would have done considerable injury to the troops on the receiving end by ricocheting and rolling, but weeks of rain had turned the clay soil soft, and so the cannonballs buried themselves harmlessly in the wet ground, “Wherever one fell, it stuck fast,” wrote Goethe.

Brunswick and his staff were deeply discouraged that their artillery bombardment had inflicted very little damage on the French infantry in its exposed position on the low hills surrounding Valmy. The Prussian commander believed he had no choice left but to try to rattle the nerves of the untested French volunteers by sending his professional soldiers against them.

“Our troops were burning with the desire of pouncing upon the French, officers as well as men glowed with the anticipation that the general would instantly make the attack; our impetuous advance, too, seeming to indicate that such was his intention,” wrote Goethe.

The Prussian infantry formed itself into two long rows for its advance. It had only marched 200 yards before it began to take a brutal pounding from the guns manned by the expert French gunners. Brunswick called a halt to the advance to rethink the situation.

“KELLERMANN RAISED HIS HAT WITH ITS TRICOLOUR PLUME ON HIS SWORD, ‘VIVE LA NATION,’ HE CRIED. ‘VIVE LA NATION. VIVE LA FRANCE. VIVE NOTRE GENERAL,’ HIS MEN SHOUTED IN RESPONSE”

When the Prussians began their advance, Dumouriez rode to the front to consult with Kellermann. He believed that Brunswick would break off the attack rather than have his infantry decimated by walking into the teeth of the French guns. The Prussian guns scored a clear success when one of their shells detonated a French ammunition cart. The explosions, which rocked the windmill hill, produced large clouds of smoke that temporarily obscured targets in the French centre for the Prussian gunners. When two volunteer battalions broke for cover, Kellermann rode quickly to rally them before the panic spread to other battalions. In the meantime, Dumouriez issued orders for more guns and replacement ammunition to be brought forward to replace the shells that had been lost.

Christian Karl August Ludwig von Massenbach, who was the military engineer on Brunswick’s staff, had been observing the progress of the battle from La Lune. He wrongly assumed that the French morale had been broken by the explosions and rode to Brunswick to urge him to send the infantry forward again. At that moment, the smoke from the detonations dissipated, and the French artillery resumed its heavy fire. Having failed to break the French centre, Brunswick ordered the Prussian artillery to try to drive Stengel from Mount Yron instead. But Stengel’s troops also held up under the concentrated artillery fire.

Knowing that King William wanted desperately to defeat the French, Brunswick ordered the infantry to advance again at mid-afternoon, but the result was the same. The French guns laid down a deadly barrage that forced the Prussians to halt their advance. At 4pm, Brunswick called his staff together and, with the king listening, plucked up the courage to say emphatically that the Prussians would not launch a potentially costly frontal assault. “We do not fight here,” he told those assembled. The king did not object. Brunswick’s last order of the day was for the Prussians on the right to extend their line in order to cut the Chalons Road so that the French could not withdraw east.

That night, the group of soldiers that camped with Goethe asked him to share his thoughts about the battle. His reply was eloquent and befitting of a renowned author: “From this place and from this day forth commences a new era in the world’s history, and you can all say that you were present at its birth,” he said, commenting on the significance of the French victory.

Inclement weather and additional losses in the ranks due to camp sickness compelled Brunswick to order a general retreat on 30 September. Casualties on both sides were light because the bulk of the infantry had never been committed and the artillery fire was less destructive than normal given the wet conditions. The French suffered approximately 300 casualties and the Prussians approximately 200.

The ‘Cannonade at Valmy’ was momentous for the French. The day after the battle, a more radical assembly of legislators known as the National Convention met in Paris. The legislative body abolished the monarchy and replaced it with a republic. On the sodden field of Valmy, the untried Revolutionary Army had withstood a test of arms against a more experienced foe. It is no understatement to say that the French victory at Valmy saved the revolution.

FURTHER READING

- ★ **THE FRENCH REVOLUTIONARY WARS, 1787-1802** BY BLANNING, T.C.W.
- ★ **BAYONETS OF THE REPUBLIC: MOTIVATION AND TACTICS IN THE ARMY OF REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE, 1791-94,** BY LYNN, JOHN A
- ★ **THE LIFE OF GENERAL DUMOURIEZ** BY DUMOURIEZ, CHARLES FRANCOIS

Kellermann’s victory at Valmy immortalised him as a hero of the revolution



FOCKE-WULF

FW 190

The Luftwaffe's nimble Focke-Wulf Fw 190 fighter proved superior in performance to many Allied aircraft types during World War II

WORDS MICHAEL HASKEW

Perhaps the best German propeller-driven fighter of World War II, the Focke-Wulf Fw 190 also functioned as a ground attack aircraft

Agile, powerful and lethal in defending the skies above the Third Reich, the Focke-Wulf Fw 190 ranks among the best fighter aircraft of World War II. Although some engineers were sceptical that its performance would measure up to contemporary fighters already in service, the Fw 190 rapidly demonstrated that a radial engine wrapped in an appropriate airframe could produce stunning results in the hands of a skilled pilot.

When the Luftwaffe Air Ministry issued specifications in the mid-1930s for a new fighter aircraft to complement the production of the Messerschmitt Me 109, renowned

engineer Kurt Tank led a team from the Focke-Wulf Airplane Company. The team utilised an air-cooled radial engine, initially the BMW 139 and later the BMW 801 D-2, rather than the liquid-cooled inline Daimler-Benz DB 601. The majority of inline engine production was devoted to the Me 109 and Messerschmitt's twin-engine interceptor, the Me 110. The ministry concluded that additional demands for the inline engine would create unacceptable shortages of the powerplant and trusted Tank to make his design serviceable. The prototype Fw 190 flew for the first time on 1 June 1939, and the first operational fighters reached Luftwaffe squadrons within two years.

In the summer of 1942, an intact Fw 190A fell into the hands of the British, and its evaluation stunned Allied experts. The Nazi fighter was at least comparable to the legendary Spitfire variants then in service, in critical areas such as speed, rate of climb and firepower. Its influence on future Spitfire upgrades was significant. Early issues with the Fw 190 included the tendency of the radial engine to overheat and a service ceiling that limited effectiveness against high-flying four-engine Allied bombers. Professor Tank addressed these issues in a series of improvements, and from 1941-45, more than 20,000 variants were manufactured.

“THE FW 190 RAPIDLY DEMONSTRATED THAT A RADIAL ENGINE, WRAPPED IN AN APPROPRIATE AIRFRAME, COULD PRODUCE STUNNING RESULTS IN THE HANDS OF A SKILLED PILOT”



Top: The Focke-Wulf Fw 190 dispelled a widely held misconception that a radial engine was impractical in a high-performance fighter aircraft

Above: The sleek Fw 190 fighter packed heavy armament into a small airframe that nevertheless delivered speed and manoeuvrability in a dogfight



Below: Shown in flight, the Fw 190 was a compact, nimble fighter aircraft that proved quite effective against Allied bomber formations



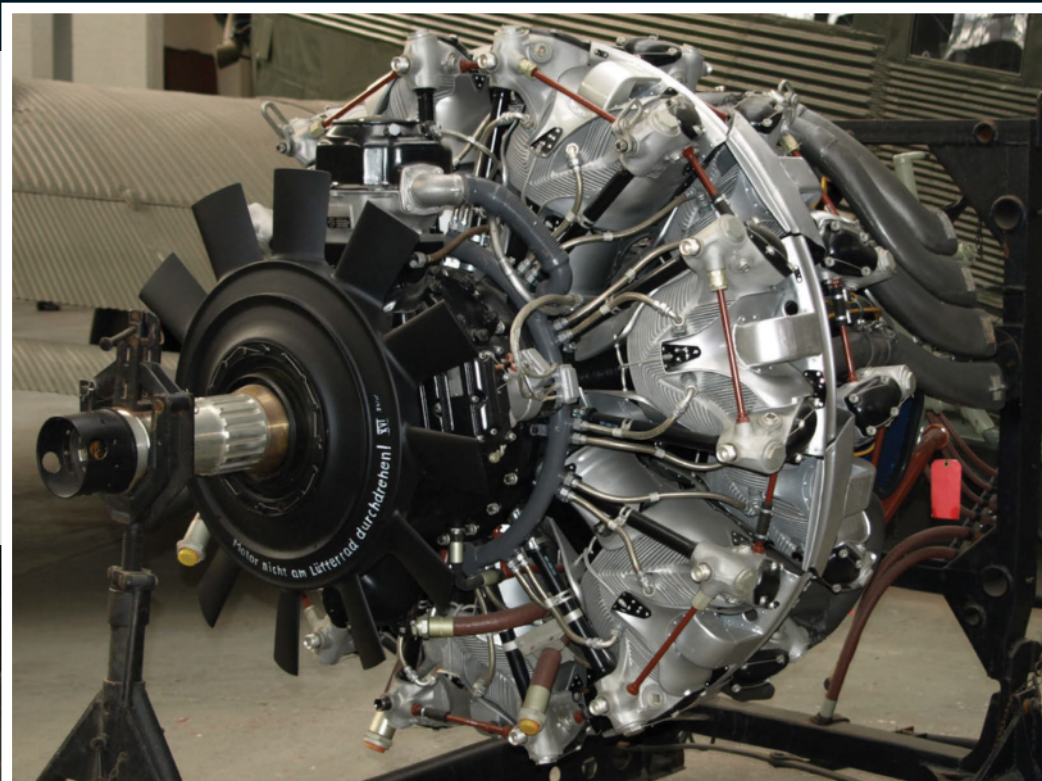
FOCKE-WULF FW 190

COMMISSIONED: 1937
ORIGIN: GERMANY
LENGTH: 8.84 METERS (29 FEET)
RANGE: 900 KILOMETRES (560 MILES)
ENGINE: BMW 801 D-2 RADIAL
CREW: 1
PRIMARY WEAPON: 4X MAUSER MG 151 20MM CANNON
SECONDARY WEAPON: 2X RHEINMETALL 13MM MG 131 MACHINE GUNS

ENGINE

While Kurt Tank and the Focke-Wulf engineering team developed the Fw 190 during the 1930s, BMW was manufacturing radial engines under license from the American company Pratt & Whitney. Benefiting from that experience, BMW engineers began production of their own double row radial engine with additional features such as fuel injection. The BMW 139 was installed in early Fw 190s but gave way to the more powerful 801 D-2, capable of achieving up to 2,100 horsepower with the aid of a methanol/water injection called MW-50. The Junkers Jumo 213 liquid-cooled inline engine powered the high-altitude Fw 190D variant.

Despite the size of its radial engine, the cowl of the Fw 190 fighter allowed the pilot good forward visibility



Above: Modified to fit the confines of the Fw 190, the BMW 801 D-2 radial engine generated up to 2,100 horsepower



Below: Aircraft engineer and former stunt pilot, Kurt Tank led the Focke-Wulf design team that developed the Fw 190 fighter plane



“THE BMW 139 WAS INSTALLED IN EARLY FW 190S BUT GAVE WAY TO THE MORE POWERFUL 801 D-2, CAPABLE OF ACHIEVING UP TO 2,100 HORSEPOWER”

The menacing barrel of a Mauser MG 151 20mm cannon juts from the wing mount of an Fw 190 fighter



Right: A Luftwaffe ordnance man packs munitions for a ground attack as an Fw 190 sits on a grass airstrip



Below: The Rheinmetall MG 131 13mm heavy machine gun was designed for use in several types of mounts aboard Luftwaffe aircraft



ARMAMENT

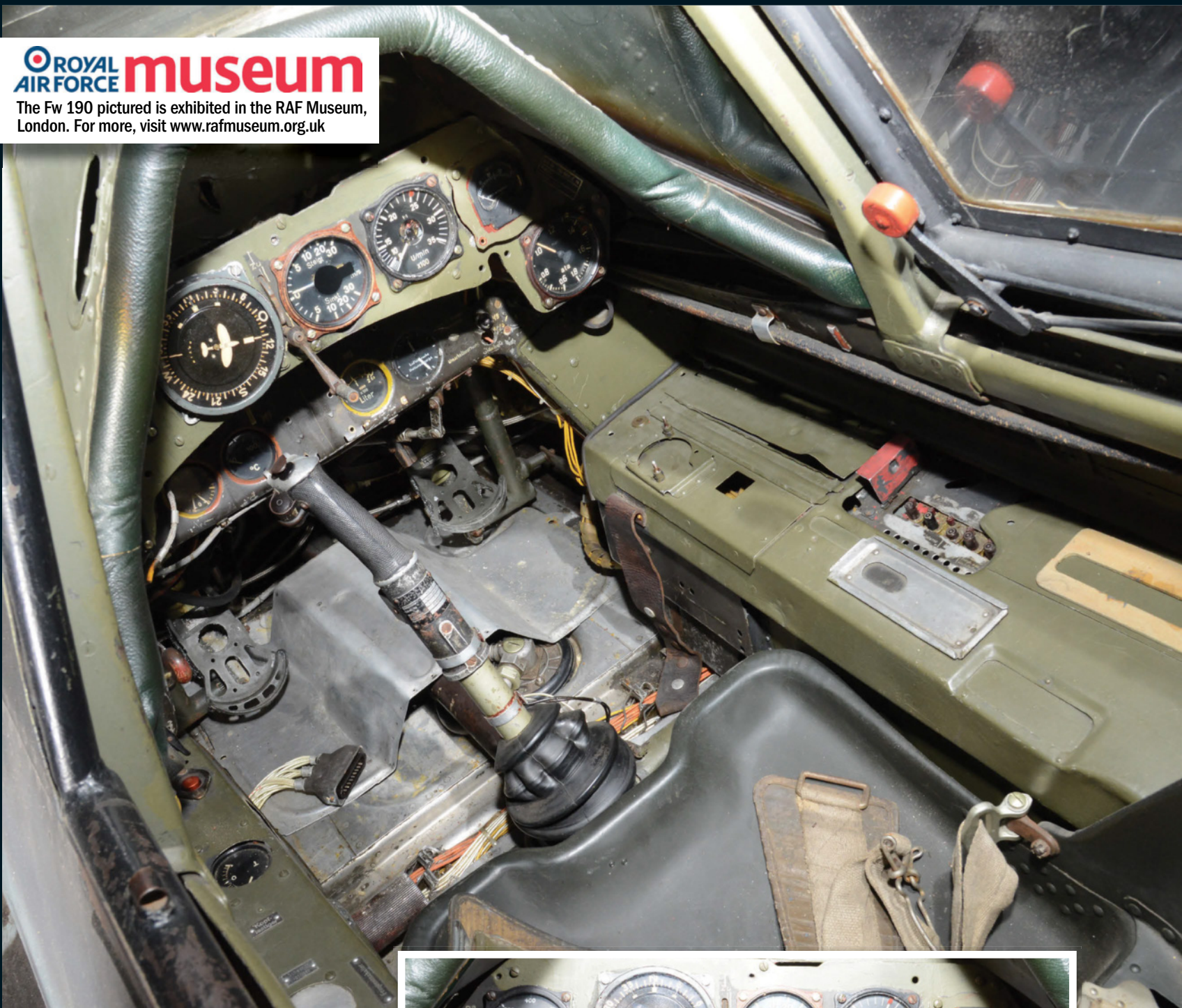
The versatile Fw 190 mounted numerous weapons configurations during World War II. The Fw 190A8, its most common variant, was armed with four Mauser MG 151 20mm cannon, two each at centre wing and in the wing roots. A pair of Rheinmetall 13mm MG 131 machine guns were mounted in the cowl. German engineers estimated that 15 to 20 hits from the MG 151 were required to bring down an Allied heavy bomber. The compact size of the MG 131 and its rate of fire, up to 900 rounds per minute, offered an ideal upgrade from earlier 7.9mm machine guns.

“GERMAN ENGINEERS ESTIMATED THAT 15 TO 20 HITS FROM THE MG 151 WERE REQUIRED TO BRING DOWN AN ALLIED HEAVY BOMBER”

This Fw 190A-8/R6 was armed with the Werfer-Granate 21 rocket mortar being loaded prior to a mission against Allied bombers



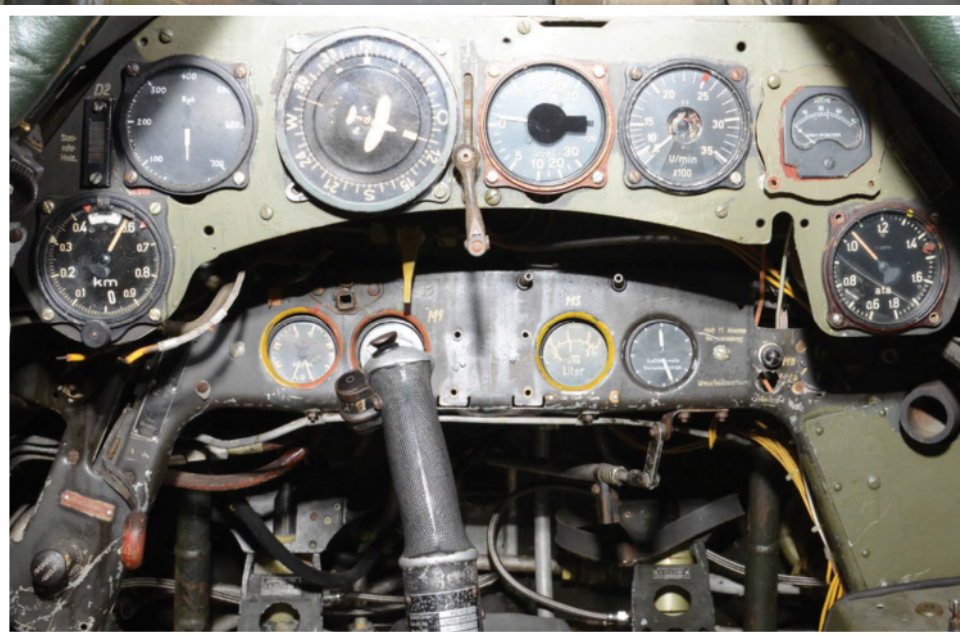
The Fw 190 pictured is exhibited in the RAF Museum, London. For more, visit www.rafmuseum.org.uk



COCKPIT

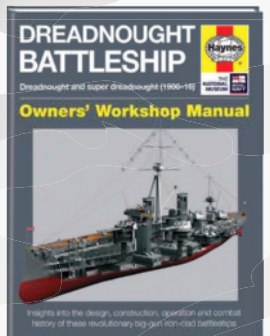
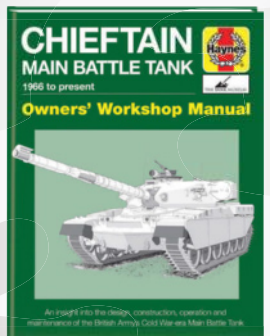
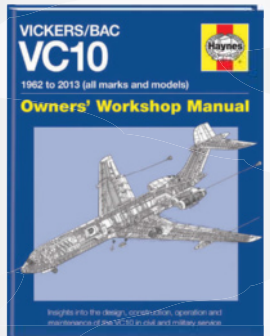
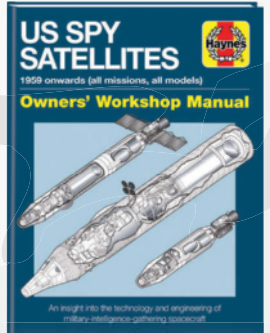
Surrounded by instrument panels and consoles with 80 buttons, levers, dials and controls, pilots described the cockpit of the Fw 190 as narrow but comfortable. The control column included the weapons selector switch and firing button along with the radio button. Primary flying instruments and engine performance indicators were across the top of the forward instrument panel with secondary gauges below. Electrical circuit cut-out switches were beneath hinged covers on the starboard console, while switches for the undercarriage, flaps and tail were on the port console. The RM 16B gunsight was accurate up to 900 metres.

Right: Although the cockpit of the Fw 190 fighter appeared narrow and confining, pilots reported that it was surprisingly comfortable





A WORLD OF
**MILITARY
INFORMATION**



WAITING TO BE
DISCOVERED

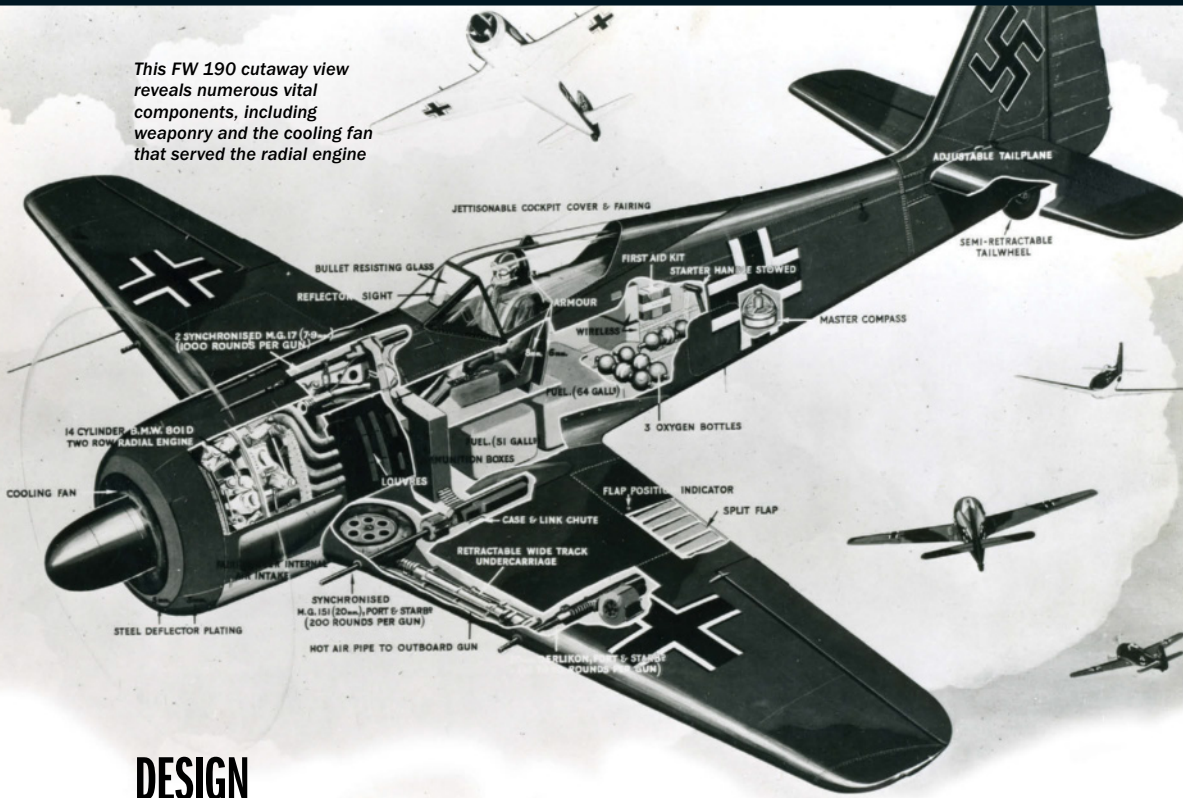


Haynes
shows you how



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This FW 190 cutaway view reveals numerous vital components, including weaponry and the cooling fan that served the radial engine



DESIGN

In designing the Fw 190, Kurt Tank was aware of radial engine aircraft successfully developed for the US Navy. He conceived a land-based fighter airframe to minimise drag, while also accommodating the weight and circumference of BMW radial engines. Tank increased airflow and ventilation to cool the powerplant, although overheating issues persisted

and at times threatened to kill the project. Tank's toil resulted in a highly manoeuvrable fighter, identifiable with heavy armament, wide-track landing gear, considerable use of electrically powered equipment, characteristically sparse wing surfaces and innovative features, such as a bubble canopy that provided exceptional visibility for the pilot.

SERVICE HISTORY

THE IMPACT OF THE RADIAL ENGINE FOCKE-WULF FW 190 FIGHTER ON THE AIR WAR IN EUROPE WAS IMMEDIATE AND DRAMATIC

When Reichsmarshal Hermann Goering observed production of the Focke-Wulf Fw 190 in 1940, he told designer Kurt Tank, "You must turn these new fighters out like so many hot rolls." The new fighter's potential to complement the Messerschmitt Me 109, and as an outstanding aircraft in its own right, soon became reality. Following trials in early 1941, the first operational Fw 190s reached JG 26 (Jagdgeschwader or Fighter Wing 26) in France.

The first air battle between the Luftwaffe's compact fighter and the British Spitfire Mk V occurred on 18 September. The Fw 190's manoeuvrability astonished RAF pilots. A stream of improvements to the early Fw 190A emerged during World War II, including enhanced radial powerplants and heavier armament such as 20mm cannon and rockets.

A superb dogfighter, the Fw 190 gained the nickname 'Würger', or 'Butcher Bird', and during operations at Dieppe in 1942, JG 26 and JG 2, both equipped with Fw 190s, shot down the majority of the 106 Allied aircraft lost. Adept at attacking enemy bomber formations, Focke-Wulf pilots often closed to point-blank range and employed co-ordinated tactics.

By 1942, improved Spitfire Mk IX and American P 47 Thunderbolt and P 51 Mustang fighters appeared over Western Europe, equalling or surpassing the performance of the Fw 190 in some respects. On the Eastern Front, Würger

pilots compiled impressive victory tallies throughout the war.

The efficiency of the BMW 801 engine decreased dramatically at greater altitude, and the high-performance Fw 190D, powered by the Junkers Jumo 213 inline engine, entered service in late 1944. The Fw 190 proved an outstanding air superiority, interdiction and night fighter. Armed with cannon and bombs, its F and G variants were excellent ground attack aircraft.

Top-scoring Fw 190 aces included Otto Kittel with 267 victories, Walter Nowotny with 258 and Erich Rudorffer with 222.



An Fw 190 pilot follows a wounded Allied four-engine bomber earthward as the damaged plane trails smoke and flame

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ARK

An aerial, black and white photograph of the USS Ark Royal (CVA-11) at sea. The ship is viewed from a high angle, showing its full length and deck. The deck is populated with numerous aircraft, including fighters and bombers, and several crew members can be seen walking around. The ship's superstructure, including the mainmast and various antennas, is visible at the bow. The ocean is dark and textured with waves.

“ARK ROYAL WAS BUILDING A REPUTATION AS ONE OF THE LUCKIEST SHIPS IN THE FLEET, EMERGING FROM COMBAT UNSCATHED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS UNTIL THAT LUCK RAN OUT IN THE AUTUMN OF 1941”

ROYAL



ROYAL NAVY STALWART

The aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal gained everlasting fame during a brief but active career in World War II

The British Admiralty is operating the Ark Royal on paper, but the nasty Germans have meanwhile proven that the British Admiralty no longer operates this ship on the high seas,” sneered Nazi radio commentator and propagandist Hans Fritzsche on the evening of 16 October 1939. “It has vanished without a trace... It would be the third major British ship lost.”

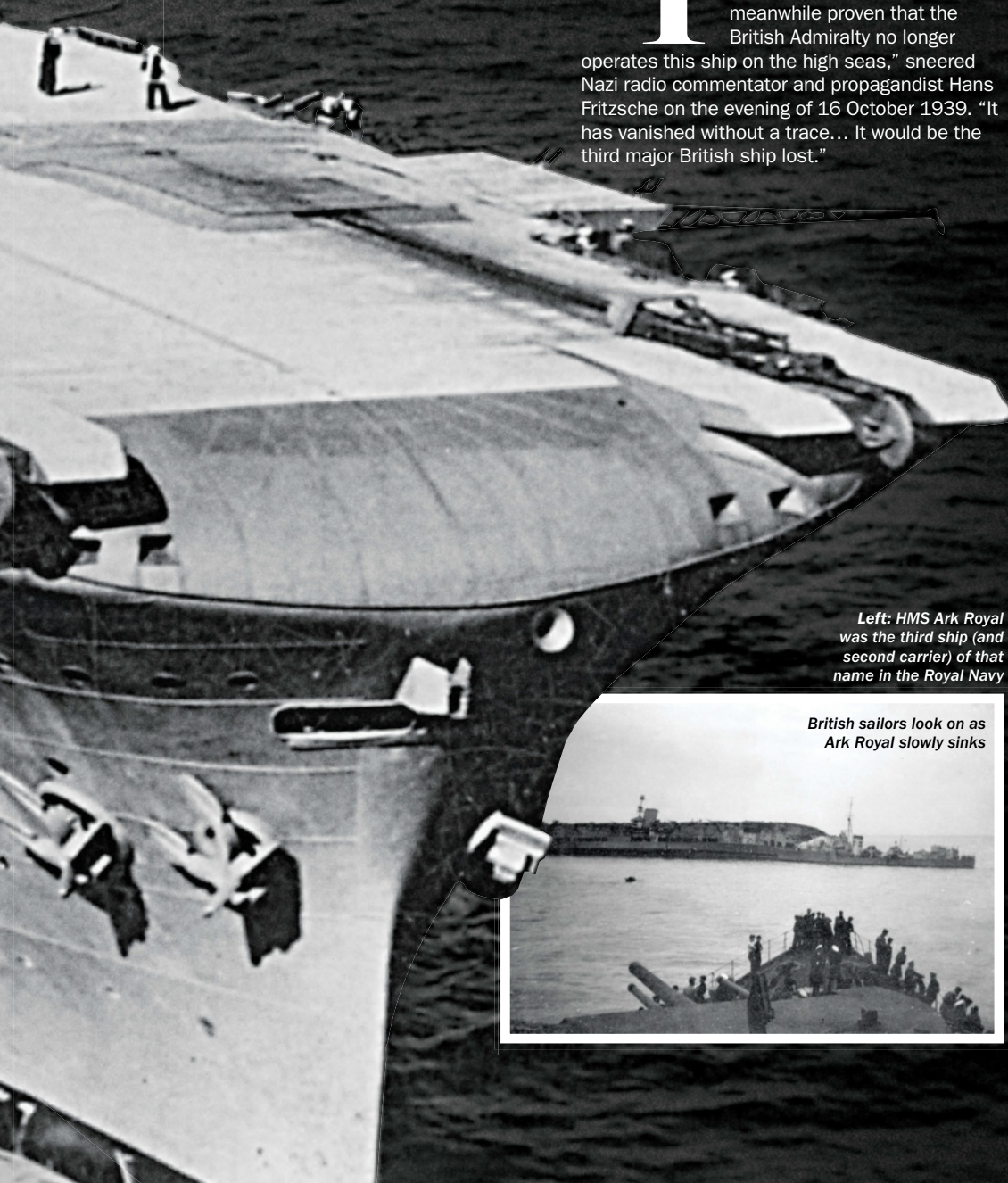
At the time of the erroneous broadcast, Ark Royal, one of the greatest warships in the illustrious history of the Royal Navy, was very much afloat. Although the Germans had already reported the redoubtable carrier sunk more than once, Ark Royal was building a reputation as one of the luckiest ships in the fleet, emerging from combat unscathed on several occasions until that luck ran out in the autumn of 1941.

The best known of the Royal Navy’s pre-World War II aircraft carriers, Ark Royal was the second carrier to bear the name, following a seaplane carrier launched in 1914 that served during World War I. The only ship constructed to its particular design, Ark Royal was first laid down 16 September 1935, and commissioned on 16 December 1938. Her construction incorporated several new design concepts, and she served as a platform for the development of carrier air operations and tactics.

When war came in September 1939, Admiral Sir Charles M Forbes, commander-in-chief of the Home Fleet, flashed a message to the navy. “War having been declared against Germany,” he related, “I am confident that the conduct of every officer and man will ensure it being brought to a speedy and successful end.” For two years, Ark Royal was in the thick of the fighting. The 22,000-ton carrier participated in the hunt for the German pocket battleship Admiral Graf Spee; during anti-submarine operations off the Norwegian coast, she narrowly avoided two German torpedoes and a 2,200-pound bomb; and participated in the first sinking of an enemy U-boat during World War II. Its aircraft were credited with the war’s first shootdown of a German plane.

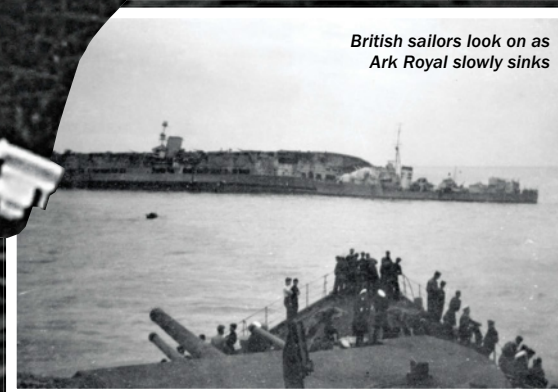
Ark Royal delivered fighter aircraft to Malta and performed convoy escort duty during the effort to provision the embattled Mediterranean island. Its most memorable exploit came during the all-out effort to track down and sink the German battleship Bismarck in the spring of 1941.

Although its wartime career was brief, Ark Royal and her valiant crew contributed significantly to the eventual Allied victory at sea in the European Theater.



Left: HMS Ark Royal was the third ship (and second carrier) of that name in the Royal Navy

British sailors look on as Ark Royal slowly sinks



DESIGN AND LAUNCH



THE DESIGN AND DEPLOYMENT EXPERIENCE OF ARK ROYAL HEAVILY INFLUENCED AIRCRAFT OPERATIONS AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF SUBSEQUENT ROYAL NAVY CARRIERS

The development of Ark Royal began 15 years before the aircraft carrier entered service with the Royal Navy in 1938. Designed in compliance with the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922, which limited the number and tonnage of capital ships among the world's largest naval powers – the United States, Great Britain, Japan, France, and Italy – Ark Royal is rightly considered a forerunner of the Illustrious-class carriers laid down during the late 1930s.

In 1923, the Admiralty embarked on a 10-year naval construction program; however, the economic downturn following World War I created a lengthy delay. Design work was completed in 1934, and Cammell Laird and Company laid down the keel of Ark Royal in September 1935 at Birkenhead on the banks of the River Mersey. The basic plan of Ark Royal did carry on with the later Illustrious-class carriers, and the tragic loss of Ark Royal in November 1941 prompted modifications to those carriers then under construction, particularly related to flood control, protection of internal spaces and auxiliary power. Ark

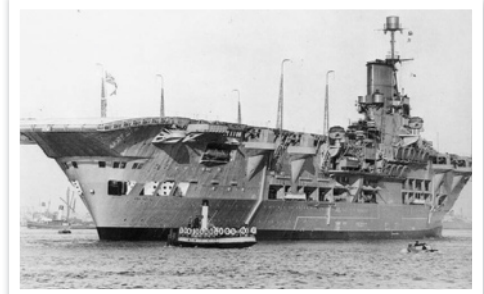
Royal incorporated several landmark design features. It was the first carrier constructed with the hangar and flight decks as integral components of the hull rather than additions to the superstructure.

Although the development of the Fleet Air Arm was a cornerstone of the 1923 mandate, only one aircraft carrier was included in the budget for the expansion. Therefore, Sir Arthur Johns, the Royal Navy's director of naval construction, faced the challenge of employing existing technology, including the steam catapult and arresting lines that facilitated the takeoff and landing of carrier-based aircraft, while also maximising space utilisation. He began the task in 1930, and Ark Royal took shape with two hangars, one above the other, along with three elevators. The carrier was originally intended to host a complement of 72 planes; however, space constraints reduced the number to 60 and eventually to 54 as the size and weight specifications of emerging aircraft types increased.

Ark Royal's flight deck was 243 metres long, considerably longer than those of Illustrious-class carriers, and extended 30 metres beyond the length of the ship's keel. The superstructure towered a mighty 20 metres above the waterline.

Powered by six Admiralty boilers and three Parsons turbines producing a top speed of 31 knots, Ark Royal was launched on 13 April 1937. Its air group included up to six squadrons primarily flying the Fairey Swordfish torpedo bomber and the Blackburn Skua, a dual-purpose fighter/dive bomber.

Ark Royal's crew was piped aboard in 1938, and rather than deploying to the Far East as originally intended, the carrier was retained in European waters due to growing unrest on the continent. Following sea trials, Ark Royal was active in the development of carrier air operations protocols.



From top: Ark Royal after launch at Cammell Laird
Ark Royal pictured shortly after completion
Washington Naval Conference, 1922

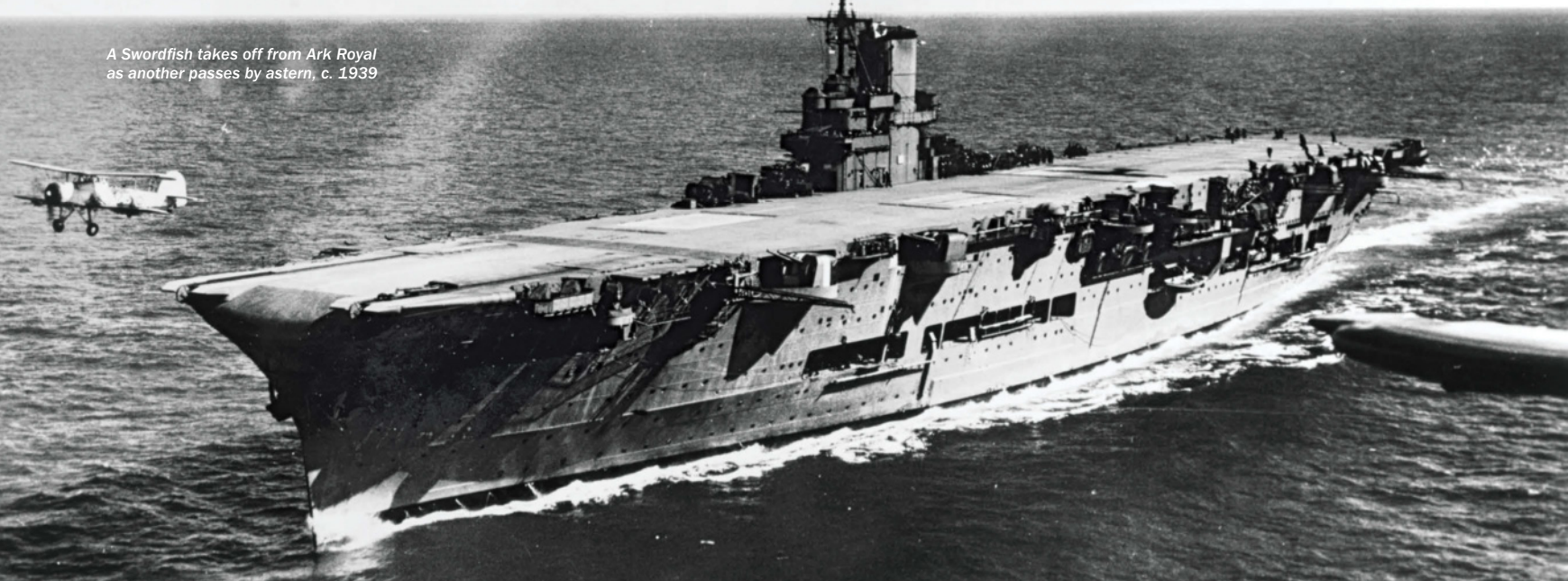
“ARK ROYAL IS RIGHTLY CONSIDERED A FORERUNNER OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS-CLASS CARRIERS LAID DOWN DURING THE LATE 1930S”



HMS ARK ROYAL

BUILDER: CAMMELL LAIRD
LAUNCHED: 13 APRIL 1937
DISPLACEMENT: 22,000 TONS (22,352 TONNES)
LENGTH: 243.8M (800FT) FLIGHT DECK 243 M (797FT)
BEAM: 28.9M (94.75FT) FLIGHT DECK 29.26M (96FT)
DRAUGHT: 6.93M (22.75FT)
ENGINES: 3-SHAFT GEARED TURBINES 102,000 SHP, 30.75 KNOTS
ARMAMENT: 72 AIRCRAFT, 16 X 114MM (4.5INCH) 48 X 2-PDR
CREW: 1,575

A Swordfish takes off from Ark Royal as another passes by astern, c. 1939



Sinking of the Bismarck as seen from the German cruiser Prinz Eugen

STALKING BISMARCK

A LATECOMER TO THE HUNT FOR THE GERMAN BATTLESHIP, ARK ROYAL WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN THE DESTRUCTION OF THE NAZI BEHEMOTH

The epic chase to sink the German battleship Bismarck in the spring of 1941 was well underway when Gibraltar-based Force H was ordered to join the pursuit. By the morning of 26 May, it appeared that Bismarck had the upper hand, steaming toward the French port of Brest, stretching for the protection of Luftwaffe aircraft and a cordon of U-boats.

A fortuitous sighting by an Allied patrol craft fixed Bismarck's position. It was clear that one hope remained. The Fairey Swordfish torpedo planes aboard the aircraft carrier Ark Royal, centrepiece of Force H, might attack and slow Bismarck, allowing the battleships King George V and Rodney, which were in hot pursuit, to close in and destroy their adversary. It was a long shot, for sure, but certainly worth the gamble.

Late on the afternoon of 26 May, a flight of 15 Swordfish climbed from Ark Royal's flight deck into the darkening sky. Flying toward Bismarck's anticipated position, several Swordfish mistakenly attacked the cruiser HMS Sheffield. The remainder flew on, sighting the Nazi battleship as twilight descended. Withering anti-aircraft fire greeted the raiders, who gallantly pressed their attacks.

Two torpedoes struck home, with one dooming Bismarck. As gale-force winds whipped the surf just 15 metres below, Sub Lieutenant John Moffatt dropped his ordinance. The torpedo slammed into Bismarck's stern, jamming her rudders 15 degrees to port. The wounded giant was forced north-west toward the oncoming battleships. Ark Royal's intrepid airmen had sealed the fate of the mighty Bismarck.

Below: Officers and ratings decorated for the part they played in the sinking of Bismarck, in front of a Fairey Swordfish aircraft



MALTA CONVOYS

ARK ROYAL MADE NUMEROUS CONVOY ESCORT RUNS TO THE ISLAND OF MALTA AND ELSEWHERE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN

On 15 April 1942, King George VI awarded the George Cross to the island of Malta to, "bear witness to the heroism and devotion of its people." The British fortress island had withstood months of relentless Axis air raids.

Critical to the valorous stand of Malta's population were the British convoys that braved hazardous Mediterranean routes to deliver sustenance to the embattled island, running a gauntlet of Axis attacks from both air and sea. Convoys were regularly set upon by enemy forces. These included German Junkers Ju 87, Stuka dive bombers and long-range Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor patrol craft armed with torpedoes, versatile three-engine Italian Savoia-

Marchetti SM 79 torpedo/dive bombers, U-boats and Italian submarines, and Axis surface warships.

During the early months of Malta's ordeal, convoys originated in the east at Alexandria, Egypt, and the west at Gibraltar, but after the fall of Crete in the spring of 1941, the eastern route was largely abandoned. Convoys sailing from Gibraltar ventured into the Mediterranean, remaining close to the North African coastline when possible, sailing within range of Axis air and naval assets based in Sicily and Sardinia, and often suffering heavy losses.

In addition to the vital Operation Tiger convoy from Gibraltar to Alexandria in the spring of 1941, HMS Ark

Royal escorted numerous convoys to Malta and ferried dozens of fighter planes to the island to supplement its defences. In July that year, Ark Royal and other warships escorted a convoy of six ships to Malta during Operation Substance. In September, Ark Royal and the carrier HMS Furious delivered 50 Hawker Hurricane fighters. Ark Royal followed up during Operation Halberd.

In mid-November, while returning to Gibraltar from the delivery of more fighters, Ark Royal was torpedoed and sunk by the German submarine U-81.

Below: A map of the Malta Convoy's route during Operation Pedestal



The Malta Convoy produces a fearsome anti aircraft barrage to fend off Axis fighters, 1942



ARK'S HUNTERS



ALTHOUGH ARK ROYAL'S AIRCRAFT WERE RAPIDLY BECOMING OUTDATED, THEY WERE STILL INSTRUMENTAL IN THE EARLY WAR EFFORT

FAIREY SWORDFISH

By 1939, the Fairey Swordfish was a flying anachronism. In an era of high performance monoplanes, the biplane was constructed mostly of wire, wood, and canvas stretched across a metal airframe. Nicknamed the 'Stringbag', the Swordfish was a slow, lumbering aircraft, mustering a top speed of 230 kilometres per hour while armed with a single aerial torpedo. Although it could accommodate a crew of three, including pilot, observer and radio operator/rear gunner, the third position was often occupied by an auxiliary fuel tank. At the outbreak of World War II, 26 squadrons of the Fleet Air Arm were equipped with the antiquated Swordfish.

Despite its shortcomings, the Swordfish was a stable torpedo launching platform, and the aircraft proved its worth, executing the Royal Navy's stunningly successful surprise attack on the Italian Fleet at its anchorage in Taranto in November 1940, and delivering the decisive blow that crippled Bismarck in May 1941, leading directly to the sinking of the Nazi battleship.

The saga of the Swordfish remains one of the most enduring chapters of World War II. The aircraft served in all theatres of the conflict, and by the time production ended in August 1944, nearly 2,400 had been built.

FAIREY SWORDFISH

BUILDER: FAIREY AVIATION
LENGTH: 11.07M (36FT)
SPAN: 13.86M (45FT)
WEIGHT: 2,359KG (5,200LB)
ENGINE: 1 X 690 OR 750
HP BRISTOL PEGASUS
224KMPH (139MPH)
CEILING: 3,261M
(10,700FT)
ARMAMENT: 2 MG, 1 X
45.7CM (18INCH) TORPEDO
OR 680KG (1,500LB)
BOMBS. THE MK II COULD
CARRY 8 X 27KG (60LB)
ROCKETS.
CREW: 3

Below: No 820 Squadron Fairey Swordfish passing overhead Ark Royal, c. 1939



BLACKBURN SKUA

Introduced to the Fleet Air Arm in November 1938, the Blackburn Skua was a two-man, all-metal monoplane developed in the mid-1930s to perform the dual functions of carrier-based fighter and dive bomber. Armed with four forward-firing 7.7mm Browning machine guns and a rear-firing 7.7mm Vickers K machine gun, the Skua was capable of a top speed of only 362 kilometres per hour, far below the performance of other contemporary fighter aircraft. In the dive bomber role, the Skua's payload included up to 227 kilograms of bombs.

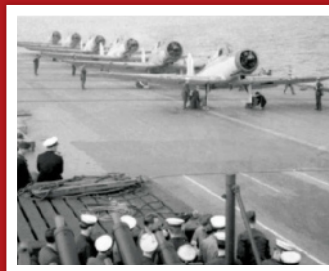
Flying from the deck of the aircraft carrier Ark Royal early in World War II, the Skua was effective against German bombers but lost heavily in combat with the modern Messerschmitt Me 109 fighter. The Skua was credited with the first confirmed British aerial kill of World War II, downing a German Dornier Do 18 flying boat in September 1939, and Skua pilots sank the German cruiser Königsberg in the harbour of Bergen, Norway, on 10 April 1940.

Only 192 Skuas were built, and the aircraft was withdrawn from frontline service in 1941 in favour of the Fairey Fulmar. A number of Skuas continued in service through to the end of the war as training aircraft.

BLACKBURN SKUA

BUILDER: BLACKBURN AVIATION CO.
LENGTH: 10.82M (35FT)
SPAN: 14.09M (46FT) OR
4.72M (15FT) FOLDED
HEIGHT: 3.81M (12FT)
WEIGHT: 2,490KG (5,490LB)
ENGINE: 1 X 905 HP
BRISTOL PERSEUS
362KMPH (225MPH)
CEILING: 6,157M
(20,200FT)
ARMAMENT: 4X BROWNING
MG, 1X LEWIS MG, 1X
2,217KG (500LB) BOMB
CREW: 2

Below: Blackburn Skuas of No 800 Squadron line up on deck



LOSS OF A LEGEND



DAMAGE FROM A SINGLE GERMAN TORPEDO SANK THE CARRIER OFF GIBRALTAR IN NOVEMBER 1941, BUT WHO'S REALLY TO BLAME?

The island of Malta in the Mediterranean was a British bastion of resistance, a thorn in the Axis enemy's side. To bolster Malta's air defences, on 12 November 1941, the aircraft carriers Ark Royal and Argus launched 37 Hawker Hurricanes destined for the island.

Their mission complete, Ark Royal and the other ships of Force H retired westward toward Gibraltar. German submarines were operating in the area, and all hands remained vigilant. Nevertheless, on the afternoon of the 13th a huge explosion sent a geyser skyward near the destroyer Legion. The German submarine U-205 had fired three torpedoes at Ark Royal; all missed, but one exploded prematurely. U-205 dashed off a report that was picked up by another submarine, U-81.

At 3pm, Kapitanleutnant Friedrich Guggenberger of U-81 sighted Force H and began manoeuvring into firing position. About a half hour later, he fired four torpedoes at the battleship Malaya. Ark Royal was preparing to land Fairey Swordfish aircraft that had been flying anti-submarine patrol.

Guggenberger's torpedoes missed Malaya, but one of them struck Ark Royal amidships on her starboard side, tearing a gaping hole 40 meters long and nine meters wide, as it detonated against the bilge keel. The starboard

boiler room, oil tanks, and air spaces were immediately flooded, and the carrier developed a pronounced list.

Communications and electric power were lost. Four men in the lower steering position, main switchboard, and telephone exchange below the waterline were plunged into darkness as seawater rushed in. Three reached safety, but Able Seaman Edward Mitchell perished, the only casualty among the ship's complement of around 1,600.

Legion came alongside, removing 1,487 crewmen. Some stayed aboard in a futile attempt to save Ark Royal. That evening, two tugboats took the carrier in tow. However, Ark Royal's list steadily worsened. Early on November 14, the carrier stood vertical on its stern for just three minutes and then slowly slid beneath the waves.

Captain Loben Maund, Ark Royal's commanding

officer, faced court martial and was convicted of negligence; however, several design flaws contributed to loss of the carrier. Most notable was the absence of secondary power, such as diesel generators. Without electricity, pumps, lighting and other equipment were disabled. Uncontrollable flooding doomed the ship.

In 2002, the watery grave of Ark Royal was discovered 1,000 meters deep, about 30 nautical miles off Gibraltar. The wreckage lies in two pieces amid a substantial debris field.

Right: Friedrich Guggenberger, Commander of U-81



Below: Ark Royal listing after being torpedoed on 13 November 1941 by U-81



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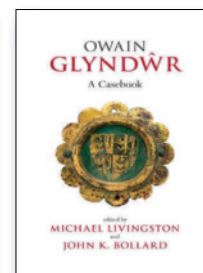
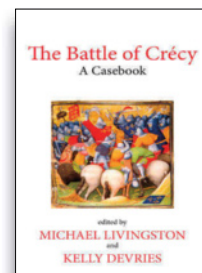
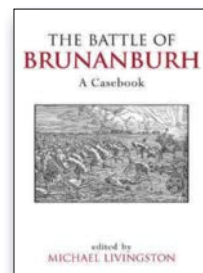
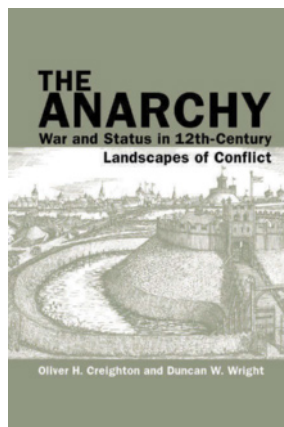
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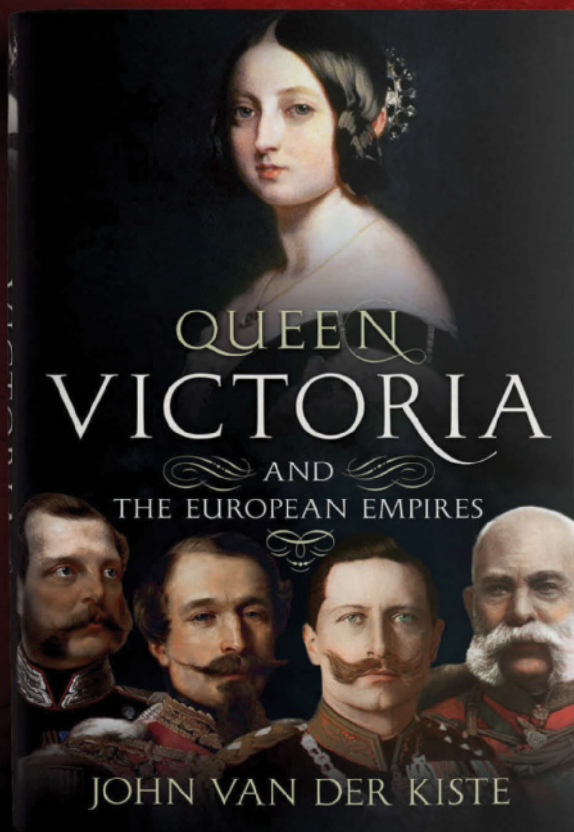
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Colombia's guerrilla war

In among the world's longest civil wars, Colombia's civilians have been the victims in a battle between security forces, insurgents and paramilitaries

WORDS TOM FARRELL

An old Colombian says that, "clean hands offend no one." It may well have been in many peoples' minds when the ceasefire came into effect.

At midnight on 29 August 2016, the agreement became binding. Weeks earlier in Havana, Colombia's President Juan Manuel Santos had signed a decree to end hostilities with Rodrigo Londono aka Timochenko. Four years after peace talks began and 52 years since taking up arms, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia) seemed to be ending its armed struggle.

There had been the precedent of a ceasefire in 1984-87 and failed peace talks in 1991-92 and 1999-2002. But this time FARC promised to disarm and join the political mainstream. The group will then surrender its weaponry to United Nations personnel and individual fighters will disclose their histories to special tribunals consisting of Colombian and international jurists.

Depending on the severity of their actions, some ex-members could be amnestied and others subject to several years' restrictions of movement or community service. FARC members could run for office in legislative elections in 2018. Under the peace terms, the Colombian government would be obliged to enact comprehensive land reform. Rural poverty and exclusion has been a major recruiter to FARC and other groups over decades.

On 26 September, the rebels signed up to the peace process in front of cheering crowds in the coastal city of Cartagena. A referendum on the specifics of the peace deal was rejected by

an extremely narrow margin on 2 October 2016, although FARC has stated it does not intend returning to arms. Days later, President Santos was awarded the 2016 Nobel Peace Prize.

Yet the ceasefire has polarised the population along lines of age, location and class. Some Colombians view it as a unique opportunity to quell a seemingly endless civil war. Others accuse the Santos government of capitulating to a terrorist group that merely seeks a new road towards its objective of Cuban-style communism. But lasting peace cannot come too soon. About 178,000 of the 260,000 people killed since 1964 have been civilians. "The problem is that Caribbean reality resembles the wildest imagination," wrote Colombia's most celebrated novelist, Gabriel Garcia Marquez. For more than half a century, that reality has been a nightmare that directly affected 17 per cent of the population.

First rural insurgency

Colombia's civil war is the legacy of La Violencia, more than a decade's worth of brutality by supporters of the Conservative and Liberal Parties in the countryside. Some regard the conflict as having begun in 1946 with a Conservative electoral victory after which police and politicians encouraged pro-Conservative peasants to seize land from pro-Liberal peasants, leading to a cycle of violence in rural areas. Others attribute the start of the conflict to the 1948 assassination of the Liberal Party leader and presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán. Riots called Bogotazo flared in the capital of Bogotá, killing thousands. Either way, nearly 200,000 Colombians had died by the



A female FARC member treks through the Colombian countryside. FARC has claimed that it does not recruit children under 15

THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

1946-8

La Violencia begins between supporters of the Conservative and Liberal Parties. After a period of dictatorship in the 1950s, the two parties form a number of power-sharing National Front governments.

1964

FARC is founded by Manuel Marulanda as the armed wing of the Colombian Communist Party in the aftermath of an army assault on communist groups in the countryside.

1984

A ceasefire is signed in La Uribe. It lasts until 1987 when fighting breaks out and a FARC-associated electoral candidate is assassinated. FARC co-founds the Patriotic Union (UP) at this time.

“COLOMBIA’S CIVIL WAR IS THE LEGACY OF LA VIOLENCIA, OVER A DECADE’S WORTH OF BRUTALITY BY SUPPORTERS OF THE CONSERVATIVE AND LIBERAL PARTIES IN THE COUNTRYSIDE”



mid 1960s, by which time the security forces extended an unyielding rule over the countryside.

This newfound 'security' was partly achieved by greater military ties with the United States and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The latter used Colombia as a template for its 'Phoenix Program' against the insurgency in South Vietnam soon afterwards. Unsurprisingly, members of Colombia's Communist Party were hostile to the new order and sought to establish 'base' communities in rural areas.

The FARC insurgency effectively began in May 1964, when the military attacked its members in Marquetalia, Tolima Department. At the time, led by Manuel 'Sureshot' Marulanda – a pro-Liberal peasant who had embraced communism during La Violencia – 48 fighters retaliated. A few weeks later, together with 350 members from surrounding areas, Marulanda and his followers attended the first Guerrilla Conference and the Southern Bloc was born.

For the impoverished and marginalised campesinos (peasantry), their message was seductive: they would defend the poor against the cruel and rapacious security forces while providing social services, otherwise nonexistent. The Southern Bloc had become FARC by the early 1970s. Initially the group did not partake in narcotics production, relying largely on the kidnapping and ransoming of local elites to raise funds. This would change towards the end of the decade as worldwide demand for cocaine exploded, particularly in the United States.

FARC was not the only left-wing group active at this time. The Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) (National Liberation Army) had been inspired by the nearby Cuban Revolution. The ELN drew in students, intellectuals and Catholics inspired by 'liberation theology', which set Christian doctrine within a socialist context.

Founded by brothers, Fabio and Manuel Vásquez Castano, and trained in Cuba, the ELN began training in the province of Santander in July 1964. The brothers, together with most of the original leadership, were wiped out during a 1973 army offensive. Nevertheless, the ELN re-emerged in the following decade, mainly active in north-east Colombia.

During the late 1970s, the government pursued the ELN and another group called the 19th of April Movement (M-19). The M-19 had arisen after accusations of fraud in the 1970 election and espoused a mixture of Marxism and nationalism. Both were considered more of a threat than FARC at this time. The Liberal government of 1978-82 was associated with particularly aggressive counter-insurgency, and widespread abuses took place at this time.

1980s: Cartels and ceasefires

During the 1980s, the rural insurgency came to be inextricably linked with the rise of the cocaine cartels. This was the era of the all-powerful

Pablo Escobar, the drug lord whose cartel was based in the north-west city of Medellín. Escobar's empire would eventually generate \$60 million per day and Medellín would become a fraught battleground that was, "...poisoned of love for the neighbour," in the words of novelist Fernando Vallejo. When guerrilla groups began kidnapping cartel family members, their response was predictable: the formation of Muerte a Secuestradores (Death to Kidnappers) in 1981.

Like virtually every Latin American conflict since 1945, the proliferation of leftist insurgency had its corollary in the rise of right-wing paramilitaries. But the vast demand for cocaine ensured the dynamics of Colombia's war would endure long after the end of super-power rivalry in the Americas.

In 1984, a Conservative administration led by Belasario Bentancur attempted to tackle both the cartels and the insurgents. The former imperative was underscored by that year's assassination of Escobar's arch enemy, Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla. He had advocated extraditing cocaine traffickers to the United States where the judiciary was less susceptible to bribery.

For the rest of the decade, the cartels declared war on the judiciary: up to 1,000 police officers were killed and in retaliation more than ten times that number of cartel members were killed, often by police death squads or rival gang members. By contrast, there seemed reason to hope the leftist insurgency was winding down.

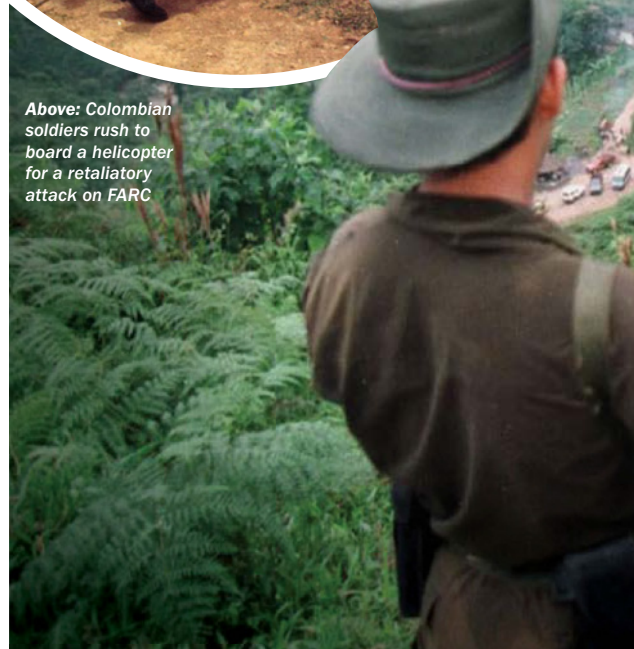
Bentancur's government had put out feelers and in May 1984, the first bilateral ceasefire with FARC was agreed at La Uribe in eastern Colombia, following the release of numerous guerrilla prisoners. Within a year, FARC and the Communist Party co-founded a political front called Unión Patriótica (UP) that many guerrillas joined. However, they did not disarm as they were not required to do so under the terms of the ceasefire.

The UP widened FARC's rural support base in the mid 1980s. By 1988, their mayoral candidates had won 23 municipalities, while their congressional candidates had won five seats in the Senate and nine in the Lower Chamber. But much of Colombia's ruling elite regarded the UP as no more than a guerrilla front. Many of its members were systematically killed or forced abroad by the military, cartels and paramilitaries.

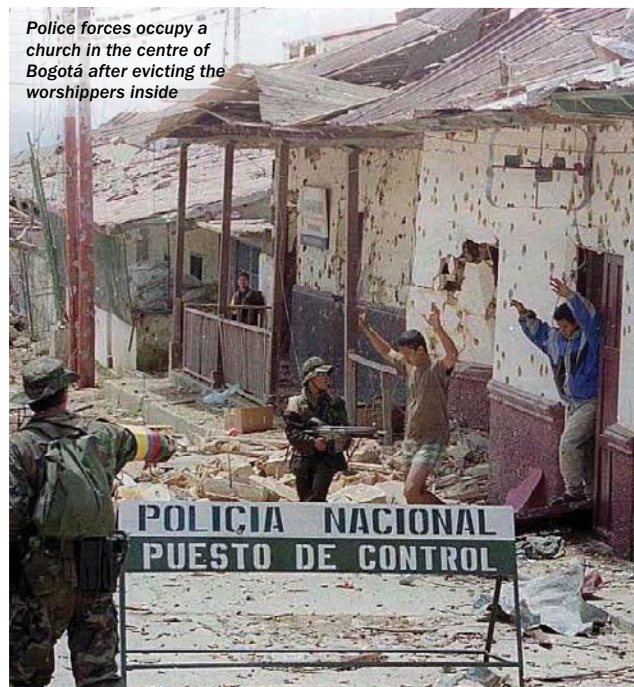
In 1988-92, more than 4,000 UP members were murdered, including the presidential candidate, Bernardo Jaramillo, who was shot dead while campaigning in 1990. By then, FARC was again fighting, the bilateral ceasefire having collapsed in June 1987 following an attack on the army in the jungles of Caquetá.



Above: Colombian soldiers rush to board a helicopter for a retaliatory attack on FARC



Police forces occupy a church in the centre of Bogotá after evicting the worshippers inside



1987-90

Uneven contact with FARC is halted under the presidency of César Gaviria Trujillo. Minor attempts at talks in Venezuela and Mexico bring no results.



1990

The army launches a combined air and ground attack on FARC headquarters in Casa Verde, La Uribe killing several dozen guerrillas, beginning large-scale counterinsurgency with more sophisticated weaponry by both sides.

1996

Five FARC units of 400 guerrillas make a co-ordinated attack and overrun Las Delicias, Caquetá in the south. 34 soldiers are killed and 60 taken prisoner.

1997-8

FARC extends rural control during the Samper administration. Town councilmen in many southern municipalities are subject to intimidation and murder by FARC and ELN.

1997

The AUC attack the town of Mapirián and kill approximately 30 civilians using chainsaws and machetes. The military is accused of deliberately ignoring the massacre.



Two FARC guerrillas guard a rebel-controlled region of south east Colombia

“BOTH GROUPS CONTINUED TO RAISE FUNDS THROUGH KIDNAPPING AND EXTORTION”



A Colombian Army jungle battalion seeks a cocaine processing lab

Concurrent attempts to negotiate lasting peace with the ELN and M-19 also failed. The latter stormed Colombia's Justice Palace in November 1985, killing half of Colombia's Supreme Court judges, allegedly with funds provided by Escobar, although some analysts dispute this.

FARC and ELN expand

The 1990s proved to be a transitional decade in Colombia. The Medellin cartel had fallen and the Cali was about to follow. In 1991, a New Constituent Assembly was written and the M-19 and several smaller groups were transformed into political parties.

But the poverty and inequality that had catalysed into civil war persisted. So did the vast profits drawn from cocaine production, with half of the world's supply now coming from Colombia.

Like FARC before them, the ELN, which had previously abjured drug smuggling on ideological grounds, began to branch into narcotics, basing its operations near the Pacific coast and Venezuelan border. However, both groups continued to raise funds through kidnap and extortion. Active in the south east, the guerrillas protected many impoverished cocoa growers from the government's eradication programmes in the 1990s.

The administration of Ernesto Samper (1994-98) was criticised for capitulating to FARC. A document from the US Defence Intelligence Agency, leaked to *The Washington Post*, even expressed fears of a countrywide FARC victory within five years. Samper's military policy of pulling troops back from remote areas to more secure positions meant abandoning 100,000 square kilometres of countryside.

Private security and intelligence gathering companies set up in 1994 found their privileges restricted by the Colombian Constitutional Court. These groups, along with some former paramilitaries grouped together to form the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC), or United Self Defence Forces of Colombia, three years later.

Intensely hostile to the left and based mainly in central and north-west Colombia, the AUC began to move throughout the north and south west within two years. Before its demobilisation in the mid 2000s, the AUC had also muscled in on the drugs trade. Supported by locals, cattle ranchers and mining interests, the AUC carried out some of the worst massacres of the conflict, several times with Colombian Army collusion.

Plan Colombia

Pablo Escobar himself had often blamed young Americans travelling to Colombia with the Peace Corps in the 1960s for creating a demand for cocoa cultivation. Whether true or not, one of their contemporaries was to praise her husband's endeavours in quashing

1998

Conservative Andrés Pastrana Arango is sworn in as president. This marks a period of greater US-Colombian co-operation and the inauguration of Plan Colombia.



1999

Using US-supplied aircraft and equipment, Colombian forces launch a 72-hour attack on FARC-held Puerto Lleras. Human rights groups condemn the attack.

February 2002

Peace talks with Pastrana end in the election season. A flight from the south to Bogotá is hijacked by FARC and French-Colombian Senator Ingrid Betancourt is kidnapped.



May 2002

AUC and FARC battle for control of the town of Bojayá in the west and kill 119 civilians. Colombian military is accused of failing to protect the town.

2004-6

Disarmament of AUC takes place and several leaders are extradited to the United States. Alvaro Uribe is re-elected with 62 per cent of the vote.

'narcoterrorism'. In November 2015, while on the presidential campaign trail, Hillary Clinton praised 'Plan Colombia', which was conceived by her husband and Andrés Pastrana Arango, a Conservative who had replaced Samper as president in 1998.

Plan Colombia sought to simultaneously curb cartel and guerrilla production of cocaine with US financial and logistical aid. But its impact, with an eventual price tag of \$10 billion, has been controversial. As of 2016, Plan Colombia has assisted Bogotá in the aerial fumigation of more than 1.6 million hectares of cocoa. This was achieved with the use of the herbicide glyphosate, which the World Health Organisation has since named a potential carcinogen.

'Counter narcotics' has been blamed as little more than a front to prosecute a military campaign. Guerrilla and paramilitary activity displaced thousands of civilians as their respective territories were encroached.

Plan Colombia has been associated with the falsos positivos (false positives) scandal of 2002-08 where innocent civilians were killed by the security forces in order to accumulate insurgent 'body counts'. One egregious example involved a middleman who was paid \$500 million to deliver poor migrant peasants, who were shot and dressed in FARC-style uniforms. A recent Human Rights Watch report named currently serving army officers at the most senior level as being aware of the practice.

One outcome of Plan Colombia was the downfall of the AUC. Proscribed by the US State Department after 2001, its leader, Carlos Castano, was murdered in 2004, reportedly by rival AUC leaders. Several senior members were extradited to the United States on charges of human rights abuses and drug trafficking, but although 20,000 paramilitaries were disarmed in 2003-06, many members have since resurfaced as 'bacrim's' (bandits).

Meanwhile, with pressure on their growing fields, the insurgents shifted towards other activities, including illegal mining, in order to source funds. However successful a 'counter-narcotics' campaign has been in Colombia, the reality of the law of supply and demand has shifted production elsewhere in Latin America.

The decline of FARC

Plan Colombia has been lauded as weakening FARC to the extent that its leadership had been compelled to return to the negotiating table.

However, FARC may have been already moving towards a deal with Pastrana when the eradications began. As the 2002 elections drew near, FARC's hijacking of a turboprop plane with 30 passengers caused him to suspend talks. Two days later, on 22 February, the French-Colombian senator, Ingrid Betancourt, was kidnapped by FARC while travelling to a disputed area of countryside.



FARC troops stand on parade as peace talks take place in their camp



“ONE EGREGIOUS EXAMPLE INVOLVED A MIDDLEMAN WHO WAS PAID \$500 MILLION TO DELIVER POOR MIGRANT PEASANTS WHO WERE SHOT AND DRESSED IN FARC-STYLE UNIFORMS”

2005

FARC launches a surge of attacks on government-held positions. The ELN declines as a fighting force and its membership shrinks.

2007

The relationship between Uribe and Hugo Chavez, who had previously mediated in FARC's exchange of hostages, breaks down. The Venezuelan ambassador withdraws.



March 2008

The Andean diplomatic crisis begins between Colombia, Ecuador and Venezuela after a military raid on a FARC base in Ecuador finds documents alleging links between FARC and the Venezuelan government.

May 2008

FARC announces the death of its founder Manuel 'Sureshot' Marulanda. In November, Timochenko is announced as new commander.



July 2008

Operation Jaque results in the freeing of 15 hostages, including Ingrid Betancourt and three American contractors. The government claims that FARC is in decline.



A FARC fighter slaughters a cow in preparation for the rebels' next meal

The presidency passed to the right-wing Alvaro Uribe. His first administration in 2002-06 was characterised by high-intensity warfare against FARC. In the febrile post-9/11 international climate, Uribe could win plaudits from the Bush administration as the scourge of terrorism.

The regime was criticised for failing to address the socioeconomic conditions that gave rise to the insurgency. Until the AUC was demobilised, official tolerance was a sore point with Washington. Uribe was also implicated in the parapolitica (para-politics) scandal by the late 2000s, a spectre that continues to haunt him today as he rallies against Santos and a peace deal with FARC.

The scandal alleges past collusion between the paramilitaries and members of Congress. Those already convicted include the president's cousin, Mario Uribe Escobar. By 2008, there was palpable evidence that FARC was under severe pressure.

That year, FARC announced the deaths of several of its senior figures, including the founder Manuel Marulanda from a heart attack in May. Two months later, Operation Jaque, an audacious Colombian military mission, tricked FARC into handing over 15 hostages, including Ingrid Betancourt and three American contractors with Northrop Grumman, whose Cessna plane had crashed in FARC territory in 2003.

The ELN was also said to be in retreat at this time. Having taken in \$225 million from illegal activities in 1998, the ELN was driven out of its base in Bolivar Department in the early-2000s and began to fragment. By the time the Santos administration sat down with FARC in 2012, its representatives were not invited. A spate of ELN attacks since then suggests a partial revival.

Although President Santos won power with a pledge to militarily defeat FARC, the 2012 talks resulted in a unilateral ceasefire and a pledge by the insurgents to end involvement in narcotics.

Crossroads

Presently, Colombia's future is uncertain, particularly after the defeat of the Santos government in the October referendum. The tenth (and possibly final) Guerrilla Conference of FARC is imminent, after which the movement may disband as a military entity. US Secretary of State John Kerry suggested the movement could be taken off USA's terror list if it adheres to the terms of the peace deal, but reintegrating thousands of guerrillas into civilian life will be a challenge.

Hundreds of ex-AUC and other paramilitaries now operate as 'bacrim's' – some gangs are considered so dangerous that the government authorised the use of air strikes against their strongholds. Although ELN announced a unilateral ceasefire in late September ahead of the ballot, this ended on 5 October when they attacked an oil pipeline in the north east.

If FARC are sincere about renouncing involvement in narcotics, the profits accruing from them are so massive that the bacrim's, ELN or perhaps even a new paramilitary group might at least try to fill in the gap left behind.

For now, the peace process is stalled although FARC's leadership insist there is 'no going back' even after the referendum result. Colombia remains polarized, from the competing leaders, Santos and Uribe, downwards. Lasting peace is unlikely to be a quick and painless business that wins unanimous support. After 52 years, few with power have clean hands.



These rebels were killed in an ambush sprung by the Colombian Army

COLOMBIAN MILITARY STRENGTH

ACTIVE FRONTLINE FORCES

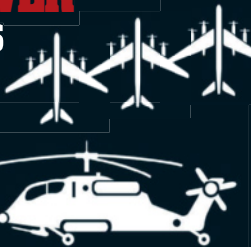
445,000

ACTIVE RESERVE PERSONNEL

62,000

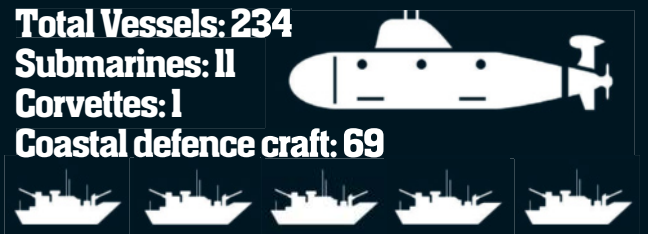
COLOMBIAN AIR POWER

Fixed Wing Aircraft: 56
 Transport Craft: 304
 Helicopters: 241
 Fighter planes: 19
 Training craft: 56



COLOMBIAN NAVAL POWER

Total Vessels: 234
 Submarines: 11
 Corvettes: 1
 Coastal defence craft: 69



2009-10
 FARC attempts a military comeback using sniper attacks, landmines, bombings and anti-aircraft attacks. Juan Santos is elected president, pledging to defeat insurgency.

2010
 FARC deputy 'Mono Jojoy' is killed by the military. They kill more than 450 members of the security forces in one year.



2012
 More peace talks take place in Havana with FARC, but not ELN. Attacks continue by both sides but offers are made on land reform and narcotics production.

June 2016
 A bilateral ceasefire between FARC and the government is signed in Havana and comes into effect at midnight at the end of August.

September 2016
 A peace agreement between government and FARC in Cartagena. ELN announces an unilateral ceasefire ahead of October ballot.

Images: Alamy, Getty, Thinkstock



Heroes of the Reich

OSKAR BRIEGER

While the coveted Iron Cross was awarded to soldiers regardless of their position, decorations for men below NCO rank were extremely rare

WORDS ROB SCHÄFER

The egalitarian nature of the coveted Iron Cross contrasted with the awards and decorations of most other German states (and indeed most other European monarchies), where military decorations were awarded based on the rank of the recipient. Nevertheless, officers and NCOs were more likely to receive it than junior enlisted soldiers. During World War I, 5,196,000 2nd Classes and 218,000 1st Classes of the Iron Cross were awarded. The awarding of an Iron Cross 1st Class to soldiers below NCO rank was extremely rare and up to the summer of 1918, only 472 ordinary soldiers and roughly 25,000 NCOs had received it.

The first enlisted man to win the 1st Class of the decoration was Oskar Brieger. He served in the 48th Reserve-Infantry-Regiment, which he was drafted into immediately after the outbreak of war in August 1914. Only a few weeks later, he had earned both classes of the Iron Cross and had received a promotion to the NCO rank of

Unteroffizier. In these early stages of the war, this was a spectacular feat, made even more unique by the fact that Brieger was a German Jew, who served in an army ripe with anti-Semitic sentiments.

During the recent fighting near Elewyt-Eppeghem, Gefreiter Oskar Brieger, ignoring his personal safety and under intense enemy shellfire, saved 32 wounded comrades and medical personnel from a partially collapsed and burning building. By doing so, he himself suffered superficial burns and a concussion to the head. Brieger has already distinguished himself numerous times and has only recently been decorated with the Iron Cross 2nd Class for defeating three Belgian soldiers in close combat and rescuing five severely wounded men of his company in the process. With his fighting spirit, bravery and contempt for death, Brieger serves as a glowing example for the men. I recommend rewarding the Gefreiter Brieger with the Iron Cross 1st Class and a promotion to the rank of Unteroffizier.

*Siegfried Karbe, Hauptmann
Kompanieführer (company commander)*

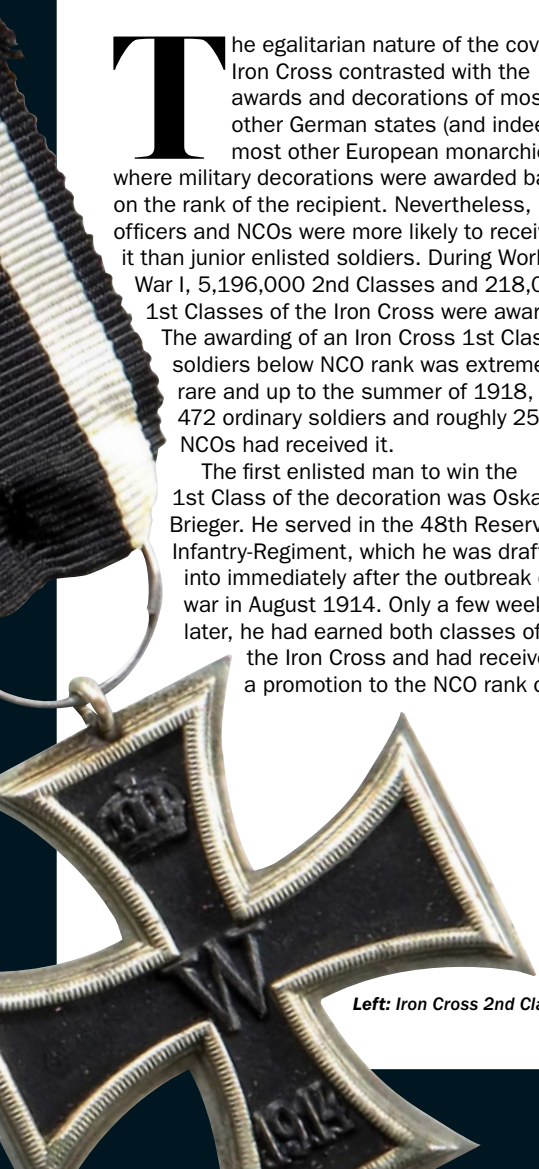
Brieger himself described his actions in a letter addressed to his family in Haltauf (Silesia):

This is how I earned my Iron Cross 2nd Class: On August 25, after an exhausting march, we arrived at Hofstade where we were greeted with a withering defensive fire. Even the civilian population, including the women, had opened fire on us. Many of my comrades were killed. One of the Franc tireurs shot the rifle out of my hands and I had to seek cover in a barn.

From there, I could observe a Belgian soldier who was shooting at some wounded comrades lying on a field. I ran up to him and rammed my bayonet into his heart. After having done so, I dressed the wounds of my comrades and carried them back to safety. The Iron Cross 1st Class I earned thus: From 9-13 September 1914 we were in constant action. As we were being targeted by heavy artillery, we set up a dressing station in the cellars of a two-storey building on the other side of a road, next to the trenches. Even though the building had been clearly marked with a red cross, it was targeted by enemy artillery. I carried six wounded comrades

"I COULD OBSERVE A BELGIAN SOLDIER WHO WAS SHOOTING AT SOME WOUNDED COMRADES LYING ON A FIELD. I RAN UP TO HIM AND RAMMED MY BAYONET INTO HIS HEART. AFTER HAVING DONE SO, I DRESSED THE WOUNDS OF MY COMRADES AND CARRIED THEM BACK TO SAFETY"

Left: Iron Cross 2nd Class



Oskar Brieger as
Vizefeldwebel. In 1914,
he was the first ordinary
soldier to be awarded
the Iron Cross 1st
Class. In total, only 472
of these medals were
awarded to soldiers
below NCO rank

**“IN THESE EARLY
STAGES OF THE
WAR, THIS WAS A
SPECTACULAR FEAT,
MADE EVEN MORE
UNIQUE BY THE FACT
THAT BRIEGER WAS A
GERMAN JEW, WHO
SERVED IN AN ARMY
RIPE WITH ANTI-
SEMITIC SENTIMENTS”**





Soldiers of the 48th Reserve-Infantry-Regiment posing for a photograph in the trenches

there and Doctor Leiferstein from Berlin treated their wounds at once.

When a shell exploded near the house, it collapsed and caught fire. 32 people, including me and the six I had carried in, had been buried alive. I managed to dig myself out of the debris and found a door that I had not noticed before. Using a heavy stone, I smashed it in and so made my way into a neighbouring cellar in which I found a cross-barred window facing the road outside. I failed to rip out the metal bars but managed to bend most of them sufficiently to squeeze myself through and to get help from the trench on the opposite side of the road. In that instance, a shell exploded nearby, throwing me into our trench and knocking me out.

When I regained consciousness, I asked the comrades nearby for help, but the heavy artillery fire made it far too dangerous to get out of the trench. I grabbed a pioneer's axe, jumped out of the trench and ran back to the house. On the way, another shell exploded without doing me any harm. Back in the cellars and using the axe, I managed to knock a hole into a wall through

which I rescued all the comrades trapped inside the cellar, including the severely wounded doctor. *Unteroffizier Oskar Brieger, Reserve-Infantry-Regiment Nr. 48*

Due to the destruction of most service records of the German Army's Prussian contingent during an air raid, it's not clear what became of Oskar Brieger. Some time after his promotion to Unteroffizier he seems to have transferred to the 28th Infantry Regiment. Another promotion to the rank of Vizefeldwebel must have followed shortly afterwards. In October/November 1916, he was registered as having been severely wounded in action. He most probably survived the war, but the details of his fate have been lost in the fog of history.

Despite latent anti-Semitism, Jewish life was an integral component of the cultural, scientific, political, economic and military life of pre-1933 Germany. Many of the things that Jewish German citizens created and contributed to as a valued part of German history and society have been forgotten, lost and destroyed in the





wake of the Holocaust. Among them is the fact that before 1933, Jewish men served without question or dissent in the ranks of the German Army, testifying and proving, if nothing else, their loyalty and affinity to their fatherland.

Approximately 96,000 Jews served in the German Army during World War I, yet, as the war dragged on, anti-Semitism flourished. Jews were accused of profiteering, spying and avoiding military service.

In October 1916, when almost 3,000 German Jews had already died on the battlefield and more than 7,000 had been decorated, Prussian War Minister Adolf von Hohenborn, in what the Zionist Organisation for Germany called “a flagrant abuse of the honour and the civic equality of German Jewry,” commissioned a census of Jewish soldiers. His goal was to ascertain how many men were actually serving at the front as opposed to those who were serving in the rear. The results of this census were not made public, ostensibly to ‘spare Jewish feeling’. The truth was that the census proved that more than 80 per cent of German Jews served on the front line.

In total, 12,500 German Jews were killed or missing in action, while more than 35,000 were decorated for their bravery. Despite fierce resistance from the aristocratic and often anti-semitic officer corps, 2,000 of them were promoted from the ranks.

The end of hostilities brought little relief. Many Germans blamed the Jews for both defeat and the revolution, encouraging the myth of the German Army having been defeated from within by a ‘Dolchstoss’, a ‘stab in the back’.

After 1933, German-Jewish veterans often hoped their military service would shield them from Nazi persecution, a belief reinforced by their exemption from some of the early anti-Jewish measures. Yet, despite these exemptions the National-Socialists did their utmost to wipe out the memory of what Jewish soldiers had done for their fatherland and to exclude the many German Jews that had fallen in battle from national commemoration.

The image of Jews fighting as patriots for their Germany did not fit into the propagandistic image the Nazis painted of them – a Jew could neither be a German nor a hero. When, finally, in the early 1940s their medals were ripped off their chests and trampled into the mud, it became clear that neither their veteran status nor the sacrifices they had made for Germany would confer them any protection in the Holocaust that was unfolding.

As a German, I went to war to defend my hard-pressed fatherland.

As a Jew, I went to war to fight for the equal status of my brothers in the faith.

Leutnant Josef Zürndorfer, 1915



Blue Max: Leutnant Wilhelm Frankl

THE HIGHEST DECORATED GERMAN JEW OF WORLD WAR I EARNED HIS FLYING LICENCE AS EARLY AS 1913

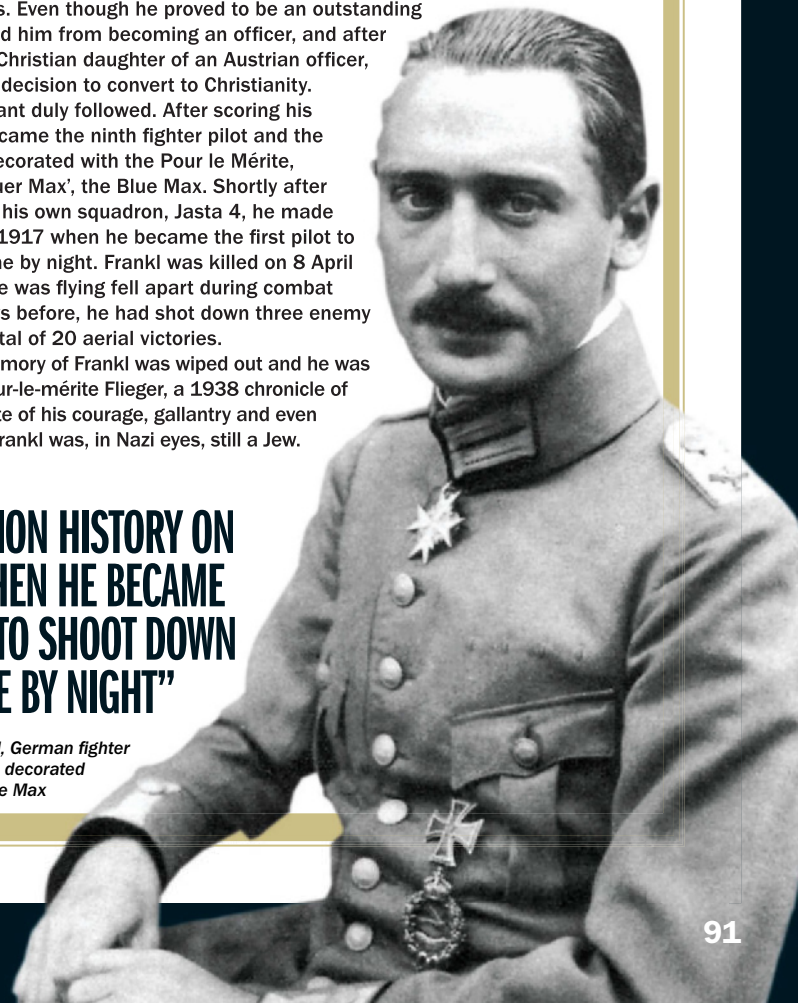
In August 1914, Frankl volunteered for service in the German Air Arm serving in Feldflieger-Abteilung 1 and 40 on reconnaissance and bombing missions. Acting as an observer in a two-seater aeroplane, he scored his first victory in air combat on 10 May 1915, when he shot down a French Voisin pusher plane using only a semi-automatic carbine. In 1916, he trained to pilot single-seater fighter planes. Even though he proved to be an outstanding fighter pilot, his faith barred him from becoming an officer, and after becoming engaged to the Christian daughter of an Austrian officer, he made the controversial decision to convert to Christianity.

The promotion to Leutnant duly followed. After scoring his eighth aerial victory, he became the ninth fighter pilot and the only born Jew ever to be decorated with the Pour le Mérite, colloquially known as ‘Blauer Max’, the Blue Max. Shortly after having taken command of his own squadron, Jasta 4, he made aviation history on 2 April 1917 when he became the first pilot to shoot down an enemy plane by night. Frankl was killed on 8 April 1917, when the Albatros he was flying fell apart during combat over France. Just three days before, he had shot down three enemy aircraft in one day, for a total of 20 aerial victories.

In Nazi Germany, the memory of Frankl was wiped out and he was excluded from the book *Pour-le-mérite Flieger*, a 1938 chronicle of German fighter aces. In spite of his courage, gallantry and even conversion to Christianity, Frankl was, in Nazi eyes, still a Jew.

“HE MADE AVIATION HISTORY ON 2 APRIL 1917 WHEN HE BECAME THE FIRST PILOT TO SHOOT DOWN AN ENEMY PLANE BY NIGHT”

Right: Leutnant Wilhelm Frankl, German fighter ace, was the ninth soldier to be decorated with the Pour le Mérite, the Blue Max



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REVIEWS

Our pick of the newest military history titles waiting for you on the shelves

COLD WAR OPERATIONS MANUAL 1946 TO 1991

Written by: Jonathan Falconer Publisher: Haynes Publishing Price: £22.99 Released: Out now

AN UNNERVING GUIDE TO HOW THE WORLD MIGHT HAVE ENDED HAD THE SOVIETS OR AMERICANS EVER REACHED FOR THE NUCLEAR BUTTON...

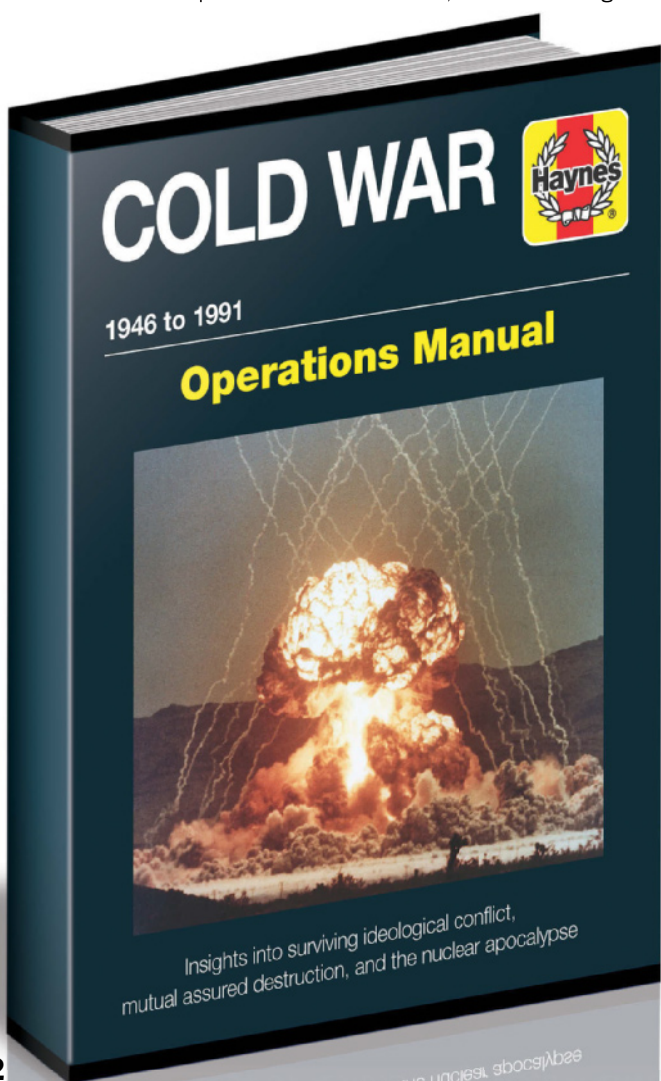
In terms of weapons, the legacy of World War II is still very much with us in the form of long-range bombers, most chillingly, of course, in the form of nuclear weapons.

As it says in the epilogue to this book, 'For 70 years the world has teetered on the nuclear precipice, sometimes coming close to catastrophe, at times taking a step or two back. Nevertheless nuclear weapons remain a part of life.' These weapons of mass destruction,

still deemed necessary by our politicians for our protection, no longer haunt us in quite the same way as the once did but this book is a chilling reminder of the kind of world they once shaped.

There was a phrase coined by military experts back in the dark days of the Cold War that sums up the lunacy of those times with almost Swiftian irony – Mutually Assured Destruction, or MAD to use its acronym. We find examples of madness all through this fascinating catalogue of an

era defined by the ideological conflict between Soviet-style Communism and American-flavoured capitalism. We get a full run down of the arms race that took place as both sides built ever-more powerful devices to finish off the world, the leaps made in detection technology to be able to spot the end of the world, as well as blueprints to bunkers, pointless drills and protective equipment that would be of no use whatsoever in the event of an apocalypse. A great if oddly unsettling read.



Below: A 29 kiloton explosion lights up the night sky in Nevada as part of the USA's nuclear testing program



Below: The B-52 was part of America's frontline nuclear deployment, able to deliver a bomb almost anywhere in the world



Onlookers see the aftermath of an atomic detonation as part of Operation Cue



THE END GAME

Written by: Susan Loughhead Publisher: Amberley Press Price: £20 Released: Out now

THE PERSONAL, THE POLITICAL & THE HISTORICAL ALL COLLIDE IN THIS FIRST-RATE ACCOUNT OF BRITAIN & AFGHANISTAN'S FASCINATINGLY INTERTWINED PAST

The author of this book works for the Department of International Development and between 2010 and 2013 her work took her to Afghanistan's capital, Kabul. It was a city that her own grandfather Sam Simms had lived in over 60 years earlier as an army clerk working in the British embassy there, and that coincidence leads her on a fascinating journey that uncovers both her own family's past and that of one of the world's most troubled countries.

Afghanistan in 1948, when 39-year-old Simm turned up was a country on the brink of enormous change. Britain's attempts to bring this most wild of countries into the Empire started in the early 19th century when the UK's first envoy Mountstuart Elphinstone had gone there using 2,000-year-old accounts of Alexander the Great's invasion to guide him. Since then there had, of course, been what became known as the Great Game, as Imperial Britain and imperial Russia had duked it out – politically and diplomatically – for control of the region. This folly that continued for most of the 19th century had ended inconclusively, but by the end of it the British had fought wars in Afghanistan, experienced massacres and epic retreats there while never quite managing to tame it.

By the time Loughhead's grandfather Simm turns up, Britain's faltering influence over the region is in terminal decline. With the loss of India to Independence in 1947, Britain no longer needs Afghanistan to act as a buffer state against any Russian threat to its now-lost colony. And as British Imperial power starts to evaporate from the region and the maps are redrawn, many of the keystones of Afghanistan's troubled future begin to be laid. Indian independence, for example, triggers a boundary dispute in the Pashtun – an area which straddles Afghan and what is now Pakistani territory – something that continues to ensure instability in the region to this day.

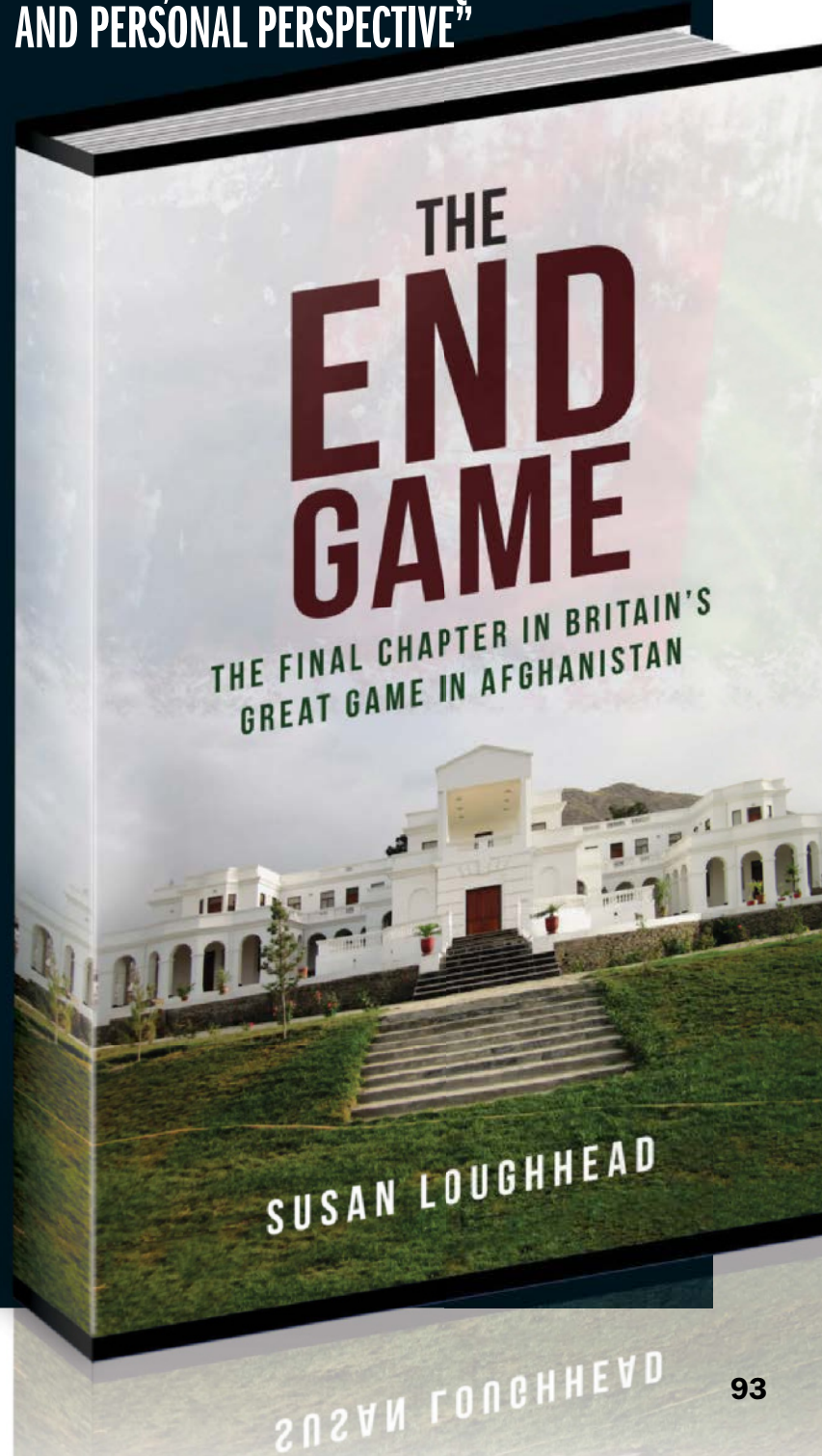
Loughhead's grandfather stayed in Kabul until 1950, just long enough to witness the country become a pawn in another great game, this time between the US and the USSR as the Cold War began to escalate. By the time Loughhead arrives in the country in 2010, it's been through hell: The Soviet invasion of 1979, the rise of a CIA-backed insurgency that results in the ascendancy of the Taliban, the US-led invasion of 2001 and another protracted war to stamp that insurgency out.

Fascinated by the country she found herself in and intrigued by how much it'd changed since her grandfather lived there she began piecing his past together using a bundle of letters he sent home. Although a minor player what her grandfather witnessed during his two years in Afghanistan as the world was changing around him, then became the basis of this book, providing enough of an outline for the author to explore how the country's history was shaped during those crucial watershed years. A curiously rich history of a country which is so inextricably linked with our own, told from a uniquely fresh and personal perspective.

A Black Hawk helicopter flies over Kabul, highlighting one of the many changes in its recent history



“A CURIOUSLY RICH HISTORY OF A COUNTRY WHICH IS SO INEXTRICABLY LINKED WITH OUR OWN, TOLD FROM A UNIQUELY FRESH AND PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE”



ALL ABOUT HISTORY

RECOMMENDED READING



THREE SISTERS, THREE QUEENS

In Philippa Gregory's latest novel, *Three Sisters, Three Queens*, she returns to the Tudor period to tell the tale of three sisters-in-law: Henry VIII's older sister Margaret Tudor, younger sister Mary Tudor and his first wife Katherine of Aragon.

Fans of the era will find much to enjoy here, with Gregory bringing the turbulent Tudors vividly back to life.



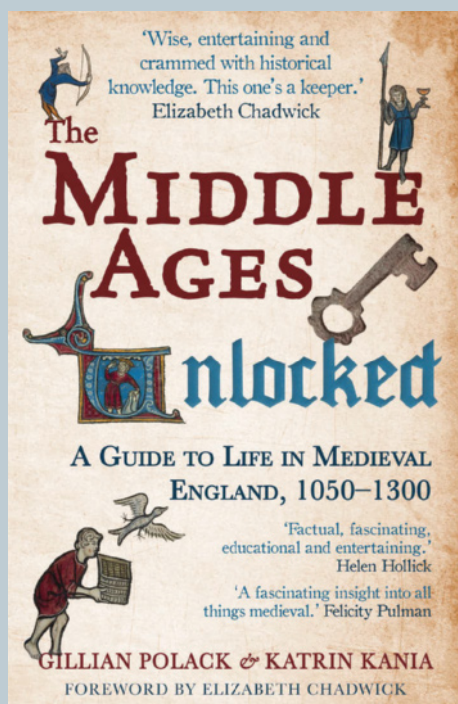
THE GREAT CONSPIRACY. BRITAIN'S SECRET WAR AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE 1794-1805

Economies in turmoil. Radical forces seeking sweeping political change. Scapegoated immigrants. The political establishment using all the

powers at its disposal – both legal and nefarious – to protect its interests – Carlos de la Huerita's work could easily be about the world we live in today rather than Enlightenment-era Europe. An utterly absorbing read that adds a fresh dimension to our understanding of a critical period, while shining a bright light on the birth of British intelligence.

THE MIDDLE AGES UNLOCKED

How much did it cost to rent a house in 13th-century Norwich? When was chess introduced to Europe? When were inquisitors first appointed by the pope? For those with an interest in all things Medieval, questions like these help define an era, adding colour and texture to the lives of our ancestors. This is an entertaining and engrossing read that can be dipped into time and again, with each visit revealing some new and fascinating factual tidbit.



BRITAIN'S JET AGE

FROM THE JAVELIN TO THE VC10

Author: Guy Ellis **Publisher:** Amberley Publishing **Price:** £12.99

AN INTERESTING BOOK, BUT VERY MUCH FOR THE KNOWLEDGEABLE AVIATION ENTHUSIAST

This is actually the second volume of Guy Ellis' history of British jet planes. Volume I covered the Meteor to the Sea Vixen, while this volume picks up the story of the 'second generation', starting with the Gloster Javelin.

The book provides brief background detail on planes including the English Electric Lightning, the Supermarine Scimitar and the Avro Vulcan, complementing it with extensive photographs.

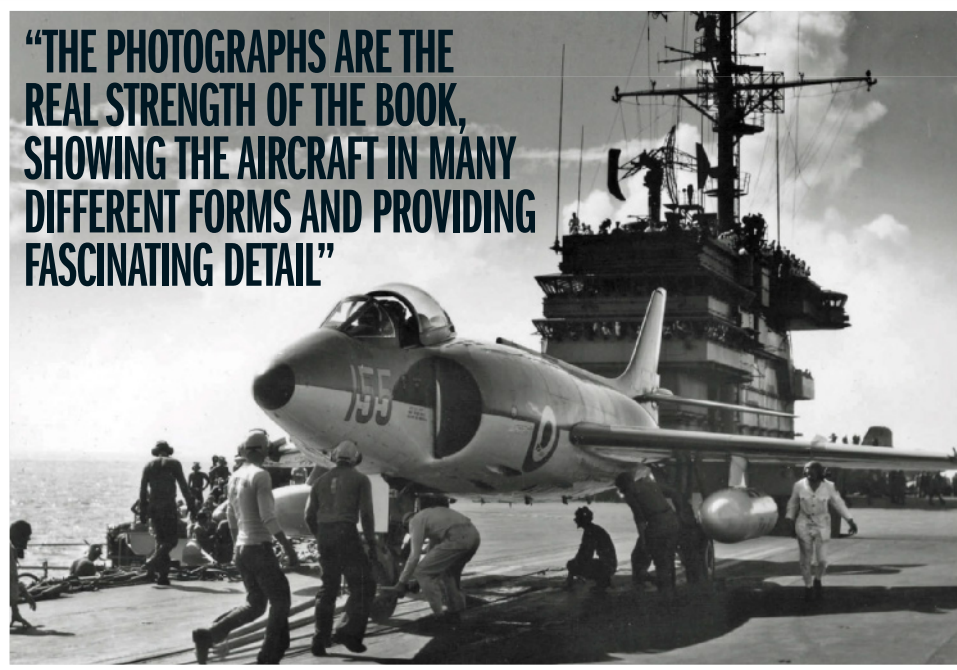
The photographs are the real strength of the book, showing the aircraft in many different forms and providing fascinating detail. The text, however, does not do the wonderful photography justice, and is often a little too sketchy to allow for a real appreciation of the planes in question.

There is no attempt to present a coherent narrative of this period in British aviation. Ellis makes do with a brief introductory paragraph to each of his sections before getting down to the information on each plane. It is therefore difficult to get an idea of how each aircraft fit into the big picture and how the second generation of planes developed over the time period considered. A contents page would have been useful as well, to allow the reader to jump to a favourite aircraft.

With the technical level set high, a good deal of prior knowledge is needed, making this book less illuminating for the casual enthusiast as it might have been. Also, misspelling the name of one of Britain's most iconic fighter aircraft, the Lightning, is really unforgivable.



Below: A Supermarine Scimitar F1 is prepped for launch off the American carrier USS Saratoga



"THE PHOTOGRAPHS ARE THE REAL STRENGTH OF THE BOOK, SHOWING THE AIRCRAFT IN MANY DIFFERENT FORMS AND PROVIDING FASCINATING DETAIL"

ETA: A BOMBER COMMAND NAVIGATOR SHOT DOWN AND ON THE RUN

Author: Gordon Mellor **Publisher:** Fighting High Ltd **Price:** £19.95

TAKE TO THE SKIES WITH A WWII VETERAN

A first-hand account of life as a navigator in the RAF, ETA delivers penetrating insight into the excitement, tension and terror that was thrown at bomber crews in varying combinations during the Second World War.

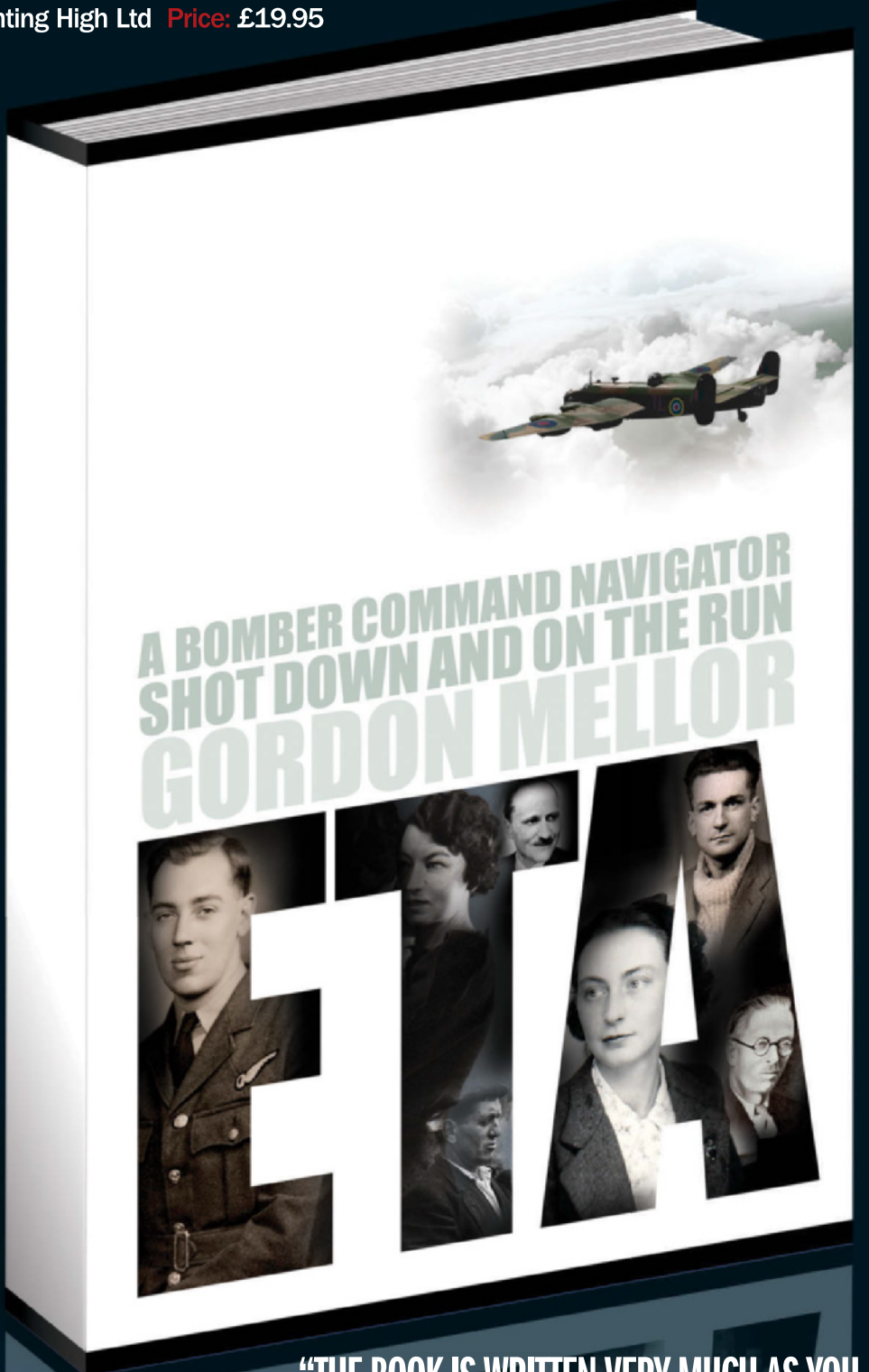
Following a detailed depiction of training, the book focuses on Mellor's experience of combat and his efforts to evade capture (with the help of the Resistance) after being shot down.

The book is written very much as you would expect to hear the story straight from Mellor's mouth, giving it an authenticity that is compelling. It inevitably leads to occasional glossing over of events, as Mellor moves on to different topics, but this actually helps to reinforce the impression of sitting next to the man himself while he recounts his exploits.

There are some fascinating snippets of information, such as the fact that the navigators were often the first to know where a bombing mission would be targeting, in order to give them chance to prepare themselves for the challenge of getting the plane there and back safely and on time. The pilots, traditionally viewed as the top dogs of an aircraft crew, would often have to ask the navigator where they were going.

Mellor's conversational style hits top gear during bombing missions, with the approach to Cologne during one run depicted in eerie detail. Mellor's story never loses sight of the human tragedy of the events he took part in, but the overriding attitude, one of having a job to do and getting on with it, shines through.

An aerial photo of Cologne after the Allied bombing raids



“THE BOOK IS WRITTEN VERY MUCH AS YOU WOULD EXPECT TO HEAR THE STORY STRAIGHT FROM MELLOR’S MOUTH, GIVING IT AN AUTHENTICITY THAT IS COMPELLING”




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BRITISH CIVIL WAR PIKEMAN'S HELMET

The thousands of pikemen that made up civil war armies were vulnerable to vicious fighting and would rely on heavy armour to remain protected

At the beginning of the British Civil Wars, pikemen made up about one third of the infantry in both royalist and parliamentary armies. A pike would be 4.5 metres long and tapered towards the end with a sharp steel head. In battle, the pikemen formed up in six ranks, shoulder to shoulder. During fighting with other infantry, they would level their pikes at shoulder height, holding the last few feet and then march forwards towards the enemy. This tactic was known

as 'push of pike'. Although pikemen were slightly above musketeers in status, they were vulnerable to sharpshooters and if cavalry broke through their ranks, vicious fighting would occur.

Consequently, pikemen were relatively well armoured and usually wore pieces that collectively weighed about 11 kilograms, including iron helmets such as the one pictured. This particular example is a rare survival

from the period and although its owner is unknown, it saved lives at least twice. The well-made helmet was originally manufactured at the Tower of London armoury between 1629-35 and might have been the work of an apprentice called Solomon Sidthorpe.

When war broke out in 1642, equipment like this was being produced in large quantities. On one side there is a deep dent probably caused by a sword blow, perhaps by a cavalryman. The other side bears a round dent perhaps caused by a musket ball. The severity of the dents mean that in both cases the wearer would have been killed had he not been wearing the helmet.

"THEY WERE VULNERABLE TO SHARPSHOOTERS AND IF CAVALRY BROKE THROUGH THEIR RANKS, VICIOUS FIGHTING WOULD OCCUR"

**NATIONAL
CIVIL WAR
CENTRE**
NEWARK MUSEUM

The helmet has been recently acquired by the National Civil War Centre in Newark and is currently being researched before it goes on display to the public. The museum tells the complete story of the British Civil Wars (1642-51) and opens daily from 10am-5pm (4pm from October).

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:
WWW.NATIONALCIVILWARCENTRE.COM

This iron helmet saw action during the British Civil Wars and proved its worth as a piece of defensive armour

Image: National Civil War Centre



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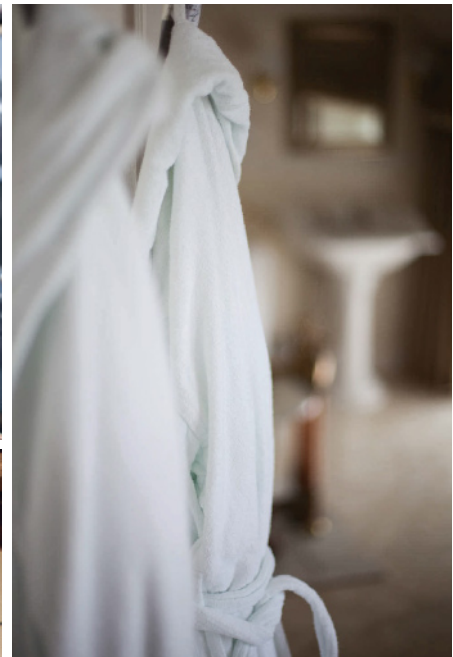
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